1896 c 6

THE

PRESENT STATE

OF THE

DORSETSHIRE MILITIA,

SET FORTH IN A SERIES OF

LETTERS

BETWEEN

THE COLONEL [L. Pitt, Lieut. Colonel]

AND

SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

OF

THAT REGIMENT,

FROM SEPTEMBER 1793 TO THIS TIME.

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MDCCXCVII.

G.R. III.
BRITISH MUSEUM

INTRODUCTION.

IT would be a reflexion upon the good ſenſe, candour, and penetration of thoſe who may have the patience (and much it will require) to attend to the ſubject of the following ſheets, to doubt of their perfect conviction of the extreme reluctance with which the Writer has been forced into the production of them. That reluctance, joined to the earneſt hope that ſome conciliatory ſteps, adequate to the occaſion, would be taken to prevent its neceſſity, have been the means of delaying, perhaps too long, the true ſtatement of the cauſe and conſequences of the derangement of the Dorſetſhire Regiment of Militia, which it is at length become neceſſary to be made evident for the ſake, it ſhould ſeem, of every man concerned in it.

No Gentleman of candour and principle can perſevere in the ſupport of that which in his conſcience he diſapproves; and no man of honour and ſpirit can be expected to confeſs errors of which he is not conſcious. A fair and ample detail, therefore, of the whole tranſaction,

founded upon the moſt authentic documents, under the ſignatures of the Correſpondents themſelves, almoſt totally uninterrupted by any collateral obſervations, cannot be liable to objection from any of the parties concerned; for as every actor declares himſelf perfectly juſtified in his own breaſt, he cannot but expect entire exculpation, and muſt therefore wiſh to obtain an *extenſive* communication of the whole correſpondence. This the following Work will evidently appear to be; and the leaſt ſymptom of oppoſition to that meaſure would be an argument of that diffidence which every man diſclaims.

A Regiment of the ſtrength of the Dorſetſhire, requires the command of an *efficient* Colonel; and the functions of that Officer are ſuſpended. If therefore, at ſuch a criſis, it be deſirable to reſtore to its complete ſtate a reſpectable Corps, ſo willing and able to ſerve its King and Country, ſome means ſhould be purſued to obtain that reſtoration, which the parties ſeem to be unable, though, it muſt be ſuppoſed, not diſinclined to effectuate.

To that end, and that the good work may be done with ample juſtice and efficacy, the whole of the proceedings ſhould undergo a minute inveſtigation; and *that* as general and diffuſive, as the length of time and frequent diſcuſſions of the ſubject have rendered the event public and

and notorious.—So far the general caſe renders ſuch a Work neceſſary to *all* parties.—But the diſgraceful predicament to which it will appear that *the Colonel* is reduced, with all the reflexions that have avowedly been caſt upon his apparent neglect of his duty, afford another inſuperable reaſon for this detail.

Though ſomething too like a challenge to a judicial proceſs will appear in the following correſpondence, no ſuch thoughts ever have been entertained by the Colonel. On the other hand, refuſed an arbitration to examine the juſtice of the charge brought againſt him—entreated to drop the correſpondence by which he was aiming at his juſtification, and indeed obliged to drop it by receiving no anſwer to the allegations offered in ſupport of that juſtification—what can remain but ſuch an appeal to the good ſenſe and equity of all thoſe whom a buſineſs of this nature can concern or intereſt?

The reference of a very private letter of admonition from a Father and Colonel to his Son and Major, to the animadverſion of all the Captains of the Regiment then in camp, without the leaſt communication to him of ſuch an intention—their immediate cenſure of the contents of that letter, without the poſſible knowledge of the cauſe of it—their adherence to that meaſure, notwithſtanding the moſt friendly

and

and temperate endeavours to convince them of their miſtake—the ſerious aggravation of that cenſure by repeated intimations that it was founded upon the opinion of the whole Corps—the alternative, ſo diſtreſſing to the Colonel, either of returning to that Corps in a ſtate of hoſtility, or of retiring from his command—will all fully appear in the courſe of this correſpondence.

Under this ſtate of ſecluſion from that branch of his duty, it will alſo appear that attempts were made to ſuperſede the authority he holds in quality of Lieutenant of the County, if he can find terms of ſufficient caution, and delicacy to treat it, after the unguarded and unwarrantable lengths to which that buſineſs was ſuffered to proceed.

The fact, on which the above circumſtance is founded, is explained indeed, but avowed, and certainly not juſtified by the explanation. To ſay the truth, all the facts contained in the following ſheets are equally avowed, and under the hands of the actors; they can therefore admit only of explanation, not of contradiction; and if the firſt has been at any time in contemplation, it is a matter of grievous concern, that through ſo long a period it has been ſo reſolutely withheld.

To a work of ſuch a nature, to materials thus authenticated, what anſwer can poſſibly be offered, that does not directly

directly tend to ſelf-confutation? And yet that intention has been ſomething more than inſinuated, with the diſgraceful conſequences of a paper-war. Whoever will undertake to wield that ſelf-deſtructive weapon, will meet no other antagoniſt. This Writer enters, thus early, his determined proteſt againſt any reply. He has advanced nothing which is not ſtamped with its own proof; and as he conceives that no man can contradict his own palpable allegations, he riſks nothing in obviating the poſſible expectation of any reply, by now declaring that no anſwer, as ſuch, can be founded in TRUTH. Were not this a fixed principle, were it liable to contradiction or deviation, a man thus upon his protection would be combating a left-handed antagoniſt, who baffles the eſtabliſhed rules of defence, and puts liberality out of its play.

The taſk of juſtification is almoſt as irkſome to a liberal mind, as the ſtate of unmerited accuſation is intolerable; and when injuries cannot be repelled, but at the expence of the moſt delicate and affecting ſentiments, they become by ſo much the more cruel and unpardonable.

Attempts indeed have been made to deny the exiſtence of thoſe injuries. But who will judge of that for him who feels them; and who will arrogate to himſelf the province of ſetting bounds to the moſt dignified of paſſions, jealouſy of

of character? If truth, honour, and juſtice, are ſo neceſſary to the reputation of a Gentleman, as that it cannot exiſt without them, who will deny that the leaſt breath of detraction from thoſe qualities muſt be repelled, from whatever quarter it may proceed?

Theſe ſentiments being at all times inſeparable from a truly liberal mind, how much more ſtudiouſly ought they to be cheriſhed at ſo perilous a criſis, when open war is declared againſt thoſe principles, and every thing that conſtitutes morality, virtue, and religion!

If theſe are undeniable and general truths, there are others which apply peculiarly to the caſe before us. It muſt be needleſs to dwell upon the great importance of the Militia ſervice, and the probability of the increaſe of that importance. However proper to repreſs what may be urged upon that ſerious ſubject, in this place, it would be equally improper to omit ſo natural an occaſion of deprecating, in the moſt preſſing terms, whatever may tend to the injury of an eſtabliſhment, the power and authority attached to which, however abſolutely neceſſary to its exiſtence, hang by ſo precarious a thread, as the will and pleaſure of thoſe alone who conſtitute it. They who engage voluntarily in the ſervice of their country ſhould endeavour to recollect, that they alſo voluntarily reſign,

pro

pro tempore, ſuch a portion of their independence, as the very being of that ſervice requires. They ſhould ſtrive to act as if that ſervice was their profeſſion, and to check thoſe firſt ſymptoms of impatience of controul, deſire of command, diſaffection, and all the little ſubaltern paſſions reſulting from them, which are ſo apt to take poſſeſſion of unguarded minds: Nor, to ſay the truth, ſhould the ſmalleſt ſpark of that peſtilence, which the Demon of Revolution is ſcattering all over Europe, be permitted to light upon any inſtitution, or any organiſed eſtabliſhment, however ſmall a portion it may conſtitute of this happieſt of Governments.

Far indeed be it from the intention of this Writer to inſinuate that any part of what has been above ſaid, can *in general* be applied to a Corps with which he has paſſed the pleaſanteſt and moſt happy of his years; he will avoid, as much as poſſible, every degree of perſonality: but it is highly incumbent on him to declare, which he does moſt cordially, that he can by no means involve in what has occaſioned the misfortunes of the Regiment, the *great majority* of thoſe Gentlemen who appear in the correſpondence. He knows too well, and feels too ſenſibly, the cauſe and manner of their unhappy deluſion; and it ſhall not be his fault, if the ſmalleſt interruption ſhould for the future take place in that harmony and friendſhip

which has ſo happily ſubſiſted between them till this unfortunate event.

It would be too like infatuation to expect, at this period, that degree of juſtification which the circumſtances demand, that open confeſſion of the fallacy of the charges, which will appear to have been reluctantly avowed, and ſtill "adhered to." This would be a ſtretch of ſelf-condemnation that can hardly be expected; and yet it is not eaſy to pronounce what effects may be produced by a view of the ſeveral parts in a few compact ſheets, and by compreſſing in one conſecutive whole what has been the deſultory work, or with ſome, it ſhould ſeem, the giddy thoughtleſs play, of near four years. In this long term, and amongſt ſo many actors, frequently uninſtructed, and perhaps never in fair conſultation, it is impoſſible that this buſineſs, however ſerious, ſhould have been duly attended to, or even generally comprehended.

Without touching upon the great original cauſe of the whole (over which may an eternal veil be caſt!), there are ſome very eſſential parts of theſe tranſactions that cannot, however anxiouſly recommended, have been communicated to the majority of thoſe Gentlemen. Theſe would have effectually diſcloſed to them the fallacious ground on which they have been proceeding, and ſtopped their progreſs when,

when, as it will ſtill appear, it would not have been too late.

What is here intended will be explained towards the end of the Third and laſt Part of this Work; and the documents alluded to will form an Appendix, to be added (in the firſt inſtance) to the few copies only to be delivered to the parties immediately concerned.—Serious and affecting as they are, may Heaven grant that they alſo may not be forced into this diſgraceful though inevitable work of juſtification, and for that end afterwards added to the other copies!

That the intention of the Writer may be underſtood, and that his fond wiſhes for a ſatisfactory atonement may ſtill be evident, it may be proper to explain to the Reader the manner in which this Work is arranged, and is intended to be diſtributed.

The whole will be divided into Three Parts; the two firſt of which will contain all the *general* correſpondence till dropped, as has been above explained. The Third Part, for reaſons upon the face of it, will be addreſſed ſolely to Major Pitt, which, with an argumentative recapitulation of the whole, will contain the reſt of the tranſactions ſubſequent to the ceſſation of the general correſpondence,

ſpondence, all equally authenticated.—The preſent intention is, to bind the two firſt Parts ſeparately from the Third (which is not yet out of the preſs), and to diſtribute them where, upon many very ſerious accounts, it is the incumbent duty of the Writer that they ſhould be ſubmitted. Nothing, it can be expected, will prevent their being followed by the Third Part, as ſoon as it is ready; but it is humbly hoped that the Appendix may ſtill be permitted to be withheld, unleſs in the affecting caſe above alluded to.

And now the intelligent Reader has before him a man whom no conſideration but that of an offended character could have forced thus to intrude himſelf; after having in vain ſubmitted to plead in juſtification of that character before another tribunal, ſelf-erected, incompetent, but, as it will appear, determined. Too conſcious of the rectitude, not only of his intentions, but of his conduct, through the whole of theſe tranſactions, he cannot ſubmit to implore that acquittal, which muſt reſult from the intelligence and equity of thoſe judges to whom he now appeals. He is, however, too well acquainted with human nature, not to be prepared for the uſual operations of partiality and prejudice; and has too much experience not to expect the conſtant fate of thoſe who are guilty of the unpardonable crime of BEING IN THE RIGHT.

LETTERS

BETWEEN

THE COLONEL

AND

SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

OF THE

DORSETSHIRE MILITIA.

PART I.

ALTHOUGH by the ſubſequent Correſpondence there will appear to have preexiſted ample reaſon for the following Letter to Major Pitt, it may nevertheleſs be neceſſary to prefix ſome ſhort remarks to it, as it was the immediate cauſe of an event, which may be attended with ſerious conſequences. To an obſerver perfectly uninſtructed, the turn and ſtyle of the Letter may appear too ſevere for the occaſion; but it muſt be remembered, that the real cauſe of it was known to this writer only; that he muſt be the beſt judge of the diſpoſition of the perſon to whom he addreſſed himſelf; that it was intended to be ſeen by him alone (no copy of it being taken); and that it was ſeriouſly to correct and place in the ſtrongeſt light, and that privately, as well the danger as the vice proceeding from a turn of mind too often experienced in his Correſpondent.

To go no farther than the object before us, there now evidently appears to be ſufficient reaſon for ſuch a letter, from what concerns the ſafety and well-being of the Regiment, independent of every other conſideration. Had not this public attack called for a ſimilar defence, no other conſideration could have occaſioned the interruption of that patience which had been ſo long exerciſed.

N° I.

From Lord Rivers to Major Pitt.

London, Sept. 7, 1793.

DEAR GEORGE,

TAYLER* has more to do, in conſequence of his wife's death, than he expected, and not a little for the Regiment, as I myſelf am on the point of leaving town: he therefore hopes that his leave of abſence will be prolonged two whole days only, and he will certainly be in Camp on Friday next the 13th. He is doing all he can in conſequence of the letter you incloſed to me open; but he fairly and calmly confeſſes that it is not very pleaſant to be employed by thoſe whom he has the misfortune never to pleaſe. I muſt own that I am not at all ſurpriſed at this ſentiment of his; and it is my duty, in every relation I bear to you, as your friend, your colonel, and your father, to adviſe you very ſeriouſly to conſider a little before you puſh to the uttermoſt a man who is warm, and perhaps of a ſpirit, if thoroughly provoked, as ungovernable as your own, though, let me tell you, of a very different kind. He has ſpoken to me, on my queſtioning him, with the utmoſt freedom and confidence, and, I believe, has concealed nothing from me; and I muſt therefore repeat, that it will be highly adviſeable for you to moderate that kind of deteſtation in which you hold him (if words under your own hand mean any thing), or at leaſt to conceal it under a conduct and behaviour towards him, which a man of his ſort muſt expect from

* The Adjutant.

from another Gentleman, let his opinion of him be what it may. With reſpect to that opinion, on what it is founded, and of what general conſequence, it is not my intention to ſay a word at preſent. I will only obſerve, that from the unguarded and ſupercilious manner in which I am informed you treat him in general, particularly before the men, you muſt deprive him of that influence over them which you ought to ſupport inſtead of deſtroying, if you expect from him any eſſential aſſiſtance. You tell me he is a cypher, and undoubtedly it is in the power of his commanding Officer to make him ſuch; but you muſt permit me to tell you, that ſuch a commanding Officer is extremely reprehenſible for thus treating his Adjutant, as long as he is permitted to hold that ſtation. I told you, and *you obliged me* alſo to ſay it to the Lieutenant-Colonel, that whenever any complaint could be lodged againſt the Adjutant, either for miſconduct or inability, that I ſhould undoubtedly liſten to it; but that it was my duty to ſupport him, and I certainly ſhould do ſo, againſt all groundleſs invective, which might be the effect of the ill temper of others, more than of his own. You muſt remember, that you both allowed him to be a very good Adjutant, and that he had, from the time of his being appointed, given ſubſtantial proofs of it; and you muſt remember too, that not a word was uttered to his diſadvantage. This was no matter of ſurpriſe to me, my dear George. I have not lived ſo long in the world without ſome knowledge of characters. But to cut this matter ſhort, let me conjure you to conſider well what you are about, and the inevitable conſequence of it. You would not wiſh, I truſt, to deprive a man of his bread, and the fruits of his profeſſion, without making him ample amends; nor do I well ſee *what* amends can be made to a gentleman, and a man of ſpirit, for detracting from his character, except by ſuch means as are not uſually very pleaſant, and undoubtedly much better avoided, with whatever readineſs and indifference they may be met. I ſay a Gentleman; and you muſt again permit me to remind you, that the character of Adjutant, under the command of his ſuperior Officers, does not derogate at all from that of a Gentleman; and I will add too (what, thank God, I feel very ſtrongly), that it is neither rank, nor fortune, that makes the Gentleman; but in ſome unfortunate caſes they aſſiſt very powerfully in producing the very reverſe of that character. Let me therefore adviſe you to be cautious of the language you uſe to the Gentleman we are treating of. You owe it

to him, you owe it to me, and you owe it to yourſelf. Nothing can be more paltry, or more demonſtrative of a little mind, than treating with inſult, or domineering over thoſe who are in your power, as far as they are under your command, and conſequently (in that ſenſe) your inferiors. Nothing in nature can debaſe a man *more* effectually, and never *ſo* effectually, as when the perſon thus treated is, by nature, greatly ſuperior to his inſulter.

Theſe are general truths, which no man upon earth can gainſay. They are uttered with ſome force, becauſe I feel them warmly, as becomes a man; but they are levelled at nobody, my dear George, whoſe conſcience honeſtly and candidly tells him that they cannot apply to him: wherever they *do* apply, I truſt, and am perſuaded that you think, with me, they ought to be directed; and that is all that can be expected.

I have been chooſing ſome ſerjeants' ſwords for the grenadiers and light infantry; and I have ſeen more of the clothing with the additional lace to the ſkirts, and the white border to the pocket flaps: it ſets off the coats, and I hope the whole will be ſatisfactory. The drummers' clothing is pretty, and good; and I hope the ſerjeants will alſo be taken care of; but, as I go to-morrow, I ſhall not be able to ſee a coat.

I am ſtill more than ever afraid that the preſent poſſeſſor of the Winchester quarters will hold faſt; and therefore I muſt preſs for the joint petition of the principal Officers of the Regiment. There are juſt now ſome reaſons (between you and me) why I cannot myſelf puſh this matter in my own perſon; but the ſame reaſons will urge me to back the requeſt of the Officers with more force.——Pray thank Mr. Hawker for his letter, and tell him that I cannot find that he is yet appointed to any regiment, though I dare ſay that he may depend upon it.

Ever, dear George,

Very affectionately yours,

(Signed) RIVERS.

N° II.

To the Right Honourable Lord Rivers.

Brighton Camp, Sept. 11, 1793.

MY LORD,

MAJOR PITT has ſhewn a letter to us which he has received from your Lordſhip, and which he wiſhes to ſubmit to our conſideration.

We are very ſorry to be called upon to give our opinions on ſuch an occaſion; but our ſituations in the Regiment require us to give them freely.* We conſider this as a duty we owe to Juſtice and to the Major, whom we conceive to be UNDESERVEDLY CENSURED.† Had your Lordſhip known the ſentiments of thoſe who, from their conſtant reſidence with the Regiment, have been witneſſes to the conduct of both parties, you would probably have formed a different opinion.

We beg leave to aſſure your Lordſhip, that from the firſt moment of our aſſembling to this preſent time, the Major's attention has been unremitted;‡ and he has laboured without ceaſing, and with great credit to himſelf, for the improvement and advantage of the Regiment. To the beſt of our knowledge, the Major has in no inſtance treated Captain Tayler improperly, either in the preſence of the men, or at any other time; and we cannot help obſerving, that in many inſtances, with reſpect to his duty as Adjutant, Captain

* Ought they to have been thus called upon, and conſequently to have delivered their opinions, without the conſent of both parties, or to have pronounced ſentence of condemnation upon one unheard, upon their own *ex parte* evidence, in a matter with which they were perfectly unacquainted; and that without recurring to the relation in which they all ſtood to the perſon thus accuſed and condemned?

† Whatever is diſtinguiſhed in ſmall capitals, is underlined in the original Letters.

‡ Nobody has ſaid the contrary, and particularly the Adjutant—*vide* his Letter of the 12th of March, 1793, the evidence of which ought not to have been rejected, as will appear by the ſequel.

Captain Tayler has been particularly indulged. When we have the pleaſure of ſeeing your Lordſhip with the Regiment, we flatter ourſelves that you will find it in a ſtate which will give ſatisfaction to yourſelf, and do credit to the Major and the Officers in general.

We have the honour to be,
My Lord,
Your Lordſhip's very obedient humble Servants,

(*Signed*) RICHD BINGHAM,
GEO. GLYN,
W. M. PITT,
E. M. PLEYDELL, jun.
J. BASTARD,
W. HODGES.

Nº III.

From Lord Rivers to Captain Bingham.

Stratfieldſay, Sept. 13, 1793.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE juſt received the letter of the 11th, written by yourſelf, and ſigned by all the Captains of the Regiment now in camp; and though it will be utterly impoſſible to enter on my juſtification in ſo ſhort a time, I cannot defer a ſingle poſt the expreſſion of my ſincere concern that any part of my conduct, either in my private or public capacity, as a Father or an Officer, ſhould have incurred the diſapprobation of ſo many of the principal Officers of a Corps, with whom I have lived ſo many years, more, I flatter myſelf, like an affectionate brother, than their Colonel. Though I was prepared for the poſſibility of this event by the Major, yet I own that the letter before me ſurpriſes me ſtill more than the ſtrange meaſure he thought fit to adopt, of "leaving my letter," to uſe his own words, "with Captain Bingham, to read and diſcuſs, that he, and the other Officers, may anſwer it "as they ſhall judge right."

I wiſh the haſte in which I wrote that letter, had admitted of my taking a copy of it, and do earneſtly intreat that it may be preſerved. I well remember, however, that it contained that kind of advice and remonſtrance which, as a Father, I thought incumbent on me to uſe towards a Son. I am not aſhamed of the ſentiments contained in that letter, whatever reaſon I may have to lament the neceſſity of uttering them, even with all the warmth in which they there appear. What I have experienced, and ſilently ſuffered, theſe twenty years, is, as yet, beſt known to myſelf: if my neceſſary juſtification ſhould produce the crimination of others, they alone who thus call for it are anſwerable.

I may be told, my dear Sir, that your interference is not between the Father and the Son, but the Colonel and his Major. Is it poſſible that either of us ſhould have diveſted ourſelves of the firſt relation, by embracing the laſt? And (let me calmly aſk), had the letter in queſtion been more attended to, would there not have appeared in it more of a moral than of a military import?

It muſt be owned, that, upon the preſent occaſion, the Adjutant was the cauſe of my letter; and ſo far it had a military tendency: I am perſuaded that I ſhould not otherwiſe have ſuffered the mortification of being brought before a tribunal of the chief Officers of the Regiment, and of receiving, under their ſignatures, a reprimand for "UNDESERVEDLY CENSURING the Major." I moſt earneſtly intreat you, my dear Sir, and the other five Captains who have thought fit to ſign the letter, to conſider whether it be not poſſible that I may have ample cauſe for all I have ſaid; and whether you think it juſt thus to condemn any culprit at your bar, unheard, who might have offered in his defence a perfect exculpation.

Since I am ſo ſeriouſly called upon, I muſt, however unwillingly, defend myſelf. And it grieves me to add, that I foreſee, from this imprudent ſtep of the Major's, thus haſtily embraced by the principal Officers of the Corps, a ſtorm that will not eaſily be appeaſed without ſerious miſchief.

I have

I have repeatedly declared, and to Colonel Michel in particular (and, I believe, in preſence of the Major), that I ſhould think it my duty to liſten to any regular complaint that the Officers ſhould prefer againſt the Adjutant. I now repeat the ſame to the Gentlemen who have ſigned the letter before me. This can be no *ſecret* tranſaction; and therefore it now appears next to impoſſible to avoid ſome formal and regular complaint to that purpoſe. I have, God knows, complaints enough in my poſſeſſion, which are now loudly called for. With theſe I ſhall not at preſent trouble you; but find myſelf very reluctantly obliged to prepare ſome extraordinary materials, which I never intended to have expoſed, had they not been rendered neceſſary in my own juſtification.

I intreat, my dear Sir, that you, and the Gentlemen who ſigned the letter, would be aſſured of my ſincere eſteem and regard, and that I remain,

Your faithful and obedient humble Servant,

(Signed) RIVERS.

N° IV.

To the Right Honourable Lord Rivers.

Brighton Camp, Sept. 16, 1793.

MY LORD,

WE are extremely ſorry that your Lordſhip ſhould for a moment have thought that we intended in the leaſt to have interfered between a Father and Son. The whole of our meaning was merely to ſpeak to the beſt of our knowledge as to what may have been alledged againſt the Major in his military capacity; and the words *undeſervedly cenſured* went to nothing more

more than our thinking that your Lordſhip had been miſinformed as to the Major's conduct ſince he has had the command of the Regiment.*

We do not conceive that our letter conveyed either a reprimand or an accuſation againſt any one;† at the ſame time we muſt beg leave to ſay, that it was not written in haſte, or without due thought and deliberation. It was not in our ideas to act in the character of judges,‡ but ſimply to give our teſtimony as witneſſes to what came within our knowledge.

We can aſſure your Lordſhip, we are all ſenſible of the mildneſs with which you have conducted yourſelf towards us and all the Officers of the Regiment, and how much we are ſatisfied in acting under your command. We are very much obliged to your Lordſhip for the expreſſions contained in the latter part of your letter, and are happy in ſubſcribing ourſelves,

With great reſpect,

Your Lordſhip's faithful and obedient Servants,

(*Signed*)

RICHᴰ BINGHAM,
GEO. GLYN,
W. M. PITT,
E. M. PLEYDELL, jun.
J. BASTARD,
W. HODGES.

* Every line of this part conveys mere ſuppoſition and doubt; and yet ſentence is paſſed upon that preſumption, as if the facts were perfectly atteſted, whereas they did not even exiſt.

† Are then the words "*undeſervedly cenſured*," applied to nobody?—and do they convey no accuſation of any body? If the cenſurer be not the Colonel himſelf, at leaſt he muſt have been the dupe of the ſuppoſed cenſurer, and it is impoſſible he could have underſtood the charge in any other ſenſe. He had never heard the Major cenſured in that capacity, nor had he ever himſelf thought he deſerved it.

‡ To pronounce ſentence is the part of judges, not of witneſſes.

N° V.

From Lord Rivers to the Captains.

Portſmouth, Sept. 19, 1793.

MY DEAR SIRS,

BEING at this place on buſineſs for a day or two, your very kind letter of the 16th has been forwarded hither; and I ſeize with much ſatisfaction the firſt occaſion of expreſſing my juſt ſenſe of the ſentiments it contains. I can very truly aſſure you, that I never entertained the leaſt apprehenſion of any bad *intention* in addreſſing to me your firſt letter; but the *fact* undoubtedly was what I took the liberty of repreſenting to you. From very long and ſad experience, I ſaw evidently that it was the Major's wiſh that you ſhould have the appearance of thus "interfering," and in *his* favour; and whatever of diſpleaſure I ſuffered to appear, was occaſioned by that circumſtance. Nor was it poſſible for me immediately to detach *his* views from *your* execution of thoſe views. In other words, he was much more than blameable for ſubmitting to your diſcuſſion and animadverſion, a letter from his father, which, however ſevere, he perfectly knew that he had incurred. He knew, at the ſame time, that you could not be ſenſible of this, and, conſequently, that it muſt ſeem that he was *undeſervedly cenſured*. Had you doubted his being ſo, I am perſuaded that you would not have undertaken to anſwer that letter; and I muſt, therefore, maintain my opinion, that he has not conducted himſelf kindly towards you, any more than towards me, by this very irregular manœuvre.

He is highly reprehenſible for taking ſuch a liberty with me, in either of the relations ſingly, in which he ſtands towards me; and it is with no other ſenſation than that of concern, that I muſt expreſs my ſurpriſe that not one of you was ſtruck with ſo glaring an impropriety. But the ſtep is taken, and cannot be recalled. I have, therefore, only to intreat your patience (and I have an ample claim to it), whilſt I lay before you the moſt convincing proofs of my having founded my letter of remonſtrance to the Major upon no

no other grounds than his own to me;—that not a word from any quarter "has been alledged againſt him in his military capacity," or any "miſinfor-"mation as to his public conduct," in any reſpect whatever.*

I will endeavour to compreſs theſe matters into as ſhort a compaſs as poſſible, and to tranſmit them as ſoon as I am able; and, however ſtrong my manifold provocations may be, the Major may aſſure himſelf that I will uſe the weapons he himſelf has put into my hands, with as much gentleneſs as the neceſſity of diſcloſing the truth, and of protecting the innocent, will admit of. Let me intreat you, my dear Sirs, (and you owe it to yourſelves) to make him recollect that he is the ſole cauſe of my uſing them at all, and that he muſt lay the conſequences at his own door.

I remain, with very great regard and eſteem,

My dear Sirs,

Your faithful and obedient Servant,

(Signed) RIVERS.

No VI.

Extract of a ſubſequent Letter from the ſame to the Captains, upon the ſubject of Quarters.

Stratfieldſay, Sept. 22, 1793.

.....IT has, however, been an act of your own (I now addreſs myſelf to all), not undertaken, you tell me, "in haſte, or without due thought and deliberation;" and, as men of honour, it is no longer in your power to withdraw your interference, ſince I firmly aſſure you, that I will have no

 farther

* Ought not this aſſertion to have put an immediate ſtop to all farther proceedings?

farther direct intercourſe upon this ſubject with the perſon who has engaged you in it, very diſhonourably on his part, and how far adviſedly on yours, I will not pretend to determine. I ſay diſhonourably on his part; for I muſt conclude, that the ſuppoſed "allegations againſt the Major in his mili-"tary capacity," or the "miſinformation as to his conduct ſince he has had "the command of the Regiment," cannot have been the ſole reſult of your own opinions; nor can I perſuade myſelf that, from the bare impulſe of your own imaginations, you would thus in a body tax your Colonel with cenſuring undeſervedly even the laſt man in the Regiment. That would be injuring me; and if you proceed upon the authority of your Major, I repeat that he has acted diſhonourably by you, as he has done by me.—But to the Regiment, and the buſineſs in hand. The more I contemplate it, the more I am perplexed by the multiplicity of the materials before me, and the difficulty of arranging them; and the more I am diſtracted between the conſequences of expoſing, and the injuſtice of concealing them. For the preſent, therefore, I will lay before you a ſmall portion of the whole, conſiſting of a few letters, with as little explanatory and introductory matter as poſſible. Theſe may tend to open your eyes in ſome degree upon the real characters and conduct of the parties concerned; and this good and neceſſary work I muſt confeſs myſelf impatient to commence, as it may retard the progreſs of much evil.

I have now received my letter to the Major,* written indeed very rapidly, but from the beſt of my heart and underſtanding; and, let me add, from a *perfect* knowledge of what it was utterly impoſſible for you, my good friends, to be in any reſpect competent judges. . . . . .

I remain, my dear Sirs,

&c. &c.

(Signed) RIVERS.

* The letter that was ſubmitted to the Captains, to "diſcuſs and anſwer." When copied, it was returned to them.

N° VII.

N° VII.

From Lord Rivers to the Captains.

Stratfieldſay, Sept. 23, 1793.

MY DEAR SIRS,

I EXPRESSED in my laſt ſome impatience to ſubmit to your conſideration ſome of the materials in my poſſeſſion, that you might be enabled to judge with fairneſs in a matter in which you have engaged yourſelves. I have ſelected a ſpecimen from the letters of each of the parties concerned; and if ever it ſhould become neceſſary to lay before you the reſt of this ſtrange correſpondence, you will and muſt do me the juſtice to allow that my ſelection has been of the moſt *favourable* nature.

The firſt you will read is from the Adjutant, and you ſhall preſently learn the occaſion of it. I give you my word, that it is the only letter of the very few he has written, that contains a ſingle word of complaint or diſſatisfaction. The buſineſs of clothing, neceſſaries, accoutrements, ſtores, and returns, fill all his correſpondence.

It is not my intention to enter, in this place, very deeply into the ſubject of the Major's voluminous correſpondence, from whence the whole of this diſagreeable buſineſs reſults. The ſpecimen annexed is of the moſt moderate kind, amongſt many that are burnt, and many that remain. If a ſpirit of moderation and conciliation appears in the anſwer from myſelf, I can truly aſſure you, that I have ſtriven to the utmoſt to preſerve the ſame through the whole of my anſwers to the moſt provoking and inflammatory productions conceivable.

To ſave our preſent time, I will omit the frequent calm advice I found it neceſſary to give the Major upon the preſent ſubject; nor will I dwell upon the interview had at Portſmouth with Colonel Michel, the Major, and the Adjutant.

Adjutant. I will only ſay, that I was miſerably diſappointed in the hope that that interview, in which nothing that was not *extremely favourable*, and *much to the honour of the Adjutant*, was alledged, would have made matters more eaſy. Immediately on my abſence, the ſame teaſing invectives (I uſe the gentleſt term) were repeated in folios; which I could no otherwiſe underſtand than as a call to my farther interference. The difficulty of contriving this, without committing the Major, and expoſing his very dangerous correſpondence, was exceſſive. Thinking it, however, my duty to diſcover what was going amiſs, I wrote a letter to Tayler, which I ſuppoſed would procure me ſome light by which to proceed. How cautious and guarded that letter of mine muſt have been, may eaſily be gathered from his anſwer; and if the man of temper and candour, the man of ſenſe, and the real gentleman are not all diſcoverable through the whole of his letter, I muſt give up all pretenſions to that common degree of underſtanding requiſite to carry through the world men of all denominations.

To the Right Honourable Lord Rivers.

Portſmouth, 12th March, 1793.

MY DEAR LORD,

SCARCELY any circumſtance that ever happened to me has ſurpriſed me ſo much as the contents of your Lordſhip's letter of yeſterday. Upon what you can poſſibly ground your idea of our not going on ſmoothly, I cannot conceive; and can only ſay, moſt ſolemnly, if there is any thing wrong, I am totally in the dark about it. That we have the moſt military way of conducting our buſineſs, has never been my opinion: we have been accuſtomed to remedy little evils by conciliatory means, rather than to foreſee and prevent them. I muſt, however, in juſtice to our preſent commanding Officer,* ſay, that he is exceedingly anxious to have every thing put on the beſt footing, and has given ſome very proper orders on different points. It is true, his wiſhes for perfection ſeem to go on rather too rapidly for a Corps that, on the preſent ſervice, muſt be conſidered as in its infancy; and having only been accuſtomed to look at the Regiment after the drilling was over, and when it had attained its beſt dreſs, he now ſees all its imperfections, but which I muſt contend are not more, and I ſincerely believe much fewer, than I have known on former occaſions. In ſhort, I have no ſcruple in ſaying, that his conceptions of the whole buſineſs appear to me ſo right, that I have nothing to wiſh but perſeverance in ſeeing his orders put in execution. I muſt declare, on my part, that I know of no reaſon

* Major Pitt.

reaſon why the Regiment may not, by the firſt of May, be as good, if not better, than ever it was, ſo far as our preſent numbers go: and I am of opinion, that a circumſtance which yeſterday ſeemed to make a lively impreſſion on the Major, from his management of it, will greatly contribute to our ſucceſs.

An anonymous letter had been ſent to the Lieutenant-Governor, complaining that the bread-money had not been accounted for to the men, and that the commanding Officer and Officers of the Regiment would never pay it to them unleſs he interfered; and likewiſe that ſome money given on account of their aſſiſting at a fire, had not been accounted for. As to the latter, it was retained merely till the number and names of the men could be aſcertained. With reſpect to the former, a general indignation ſeems to be expreſſed by the men againſt the writer of the letter. The Major acquainted them, after expreſſing his feelings for himſelf and his brother Officers very properly, that as the mode which had been adopted, and which was evidently the moſt indulgent to them, had not met with univerſal approbation, that in future they muſt be put under ſtoppages for their bread and neceſſaries, and that the bread-money ſhould be accounted for to them in the ſame manner as in the Regulars. In conſequence of which, the Major is going to contract with a baker for furniſhing bread, as is done in the Army Regiments.

As I ſet out by declaring my total ignorance of what can poſſibly have excited the ſuſpicions entertained by your Lordſhip, I can as ſolemnly declare that *I* am not conſcious, either by commiſſion or omiſſion, of having given the ſmalleſt cauſe of offence or complaint to *any one*. And as I truſt I ſhall never deceive the opinion which your Lordſhip is ſo kindly pleaſed to teſtify of my ſenſe of honour, integrity, and candour, ſo I cannot have the ſmalleſt doubt but you will, as you have hitherto done, give me an opportunity of exculpating myſelf if I have unintentionally given offence.

Though this has been a very buſy morning, I have loſt no time in anſwering your Lordſhip's letter, in the firm perſuaſion, as far as I have any knowledge, that there is not the ſmalleſt ground for your Lordſhip's apprehenſions. You will readily believe how anxiouſly I ſhall await your anſwer.

Being ever, my dear Lord,

Moſt truly and ſincerely,

Your Lordſhip's devoted and much obliged

(Signed) R. TAYLER.

I will

I will ſay nothing more on the ſubject of the foregoing letter; nor need I, ſurely, make any compariſon between that and the letter that follows, and conſequently between the tempers and diſpoſitions that produced them.

Upon the receipt of Captain Tayler's letter, I immediately diſpatched it, with infinite ſatisfaction, to the Major. He returned it, with a few words not eaſy to be comprehended.

The Major is now about to ſpeak for himſelf in the next letter.

To the Right Honourable Lord Rivers.

Camp, July 14, 1793.

After ſome obſervations upon his health, &c. he proceeds thus:

—— "But I am in ſome meaſure cheered and revived by the very diſtinguiſhed manner in which we were complimented on our inſpection yeſterday, and of which I muſt take ſome and a great ſhare to MYSELF.—The Duke of Richmond being ill, we were ſeen by Sir William Howe and Sir William Meadows, who had ſeen all the other regiments with the Duke of Richmond, and could therefore compare; and Sir William Howe came up to me, after the review, and told me he ſhould inform the Duke of Richmond that we were "perfectly and completely train'd, and fit for any ſervice that could poſſibly be required." In ſhort, we bear the bell; and Euſton tells me, that, in his opinion, we are thirty degrees beyond any other here; and all this, labouring under the diſadvantage of being worſe and more unbecomingly dreſſed than other regiments. So pray, my dear father, let me entreat you not to order jackets, but coats and hats; and I WILL ANSWER FOR your having then far the firſt regiment amongſt them,—for I well know I can dreſs men, though I did not know I could manœuvre them. But, my God! what an eaſy ſimple buſineſs it muſt be, if there was only a little help in the different departments! Thoſe who ſee the diſadvantages I labour under, give me to the full as much credit as I deſerve;—my chief impediment was much humbled before, and much improved by it; it's to be hoped now, as he has been a greater cypher even than before, that he will ſtill improve; but his ſpirit can never brook it, ſo I can't expect it.—YOU OUGHT, MY DEAR FATHER, TO HAVE THE CANDOUR TO BELIEVE ME, AND JUDGE JUSTLY, AND GIVE CREDIT AND BELIEF WHERE IT'S DUE, OR YOU WILL STAND ALONE IN YOUR OPINION. I wiſh I had ſtrength to go through the Drilling likewiſe, for that every individual ſtill wants, although they in a body do ſo well. I muſt ſay I have found the greateſt attention from every Officer in the ranks, which has cauſed our perfect good appearance." . . . .

. . . . . .

Ever, my dear Father,

Your affectionate Son,

(Signed) G. PITT.

That my diſpoſition would lead me to avoid any remarks upon the above letter, muſt appear to any unprejudiced obſerver, who reads my anſwer that follows. It would alſo be making a ſad compliment to the penetration and good ſenſe of my readers, to point out the vanity, and, I may add, the indecency, that reign through this letter. If any good man will attend to the ſpirit which dictated the lines diſtinguiſhed by ſmall capitals, he may be ſtruck with the forbearance with which it is treated in the following letter.

From Lord Rivers to Major Pitt.

Bath, July 17, 1793.

DEAR GEORGE,

I rejoice exceedingly that the old Dorſet maintains, in ſo diſtinguiſhed a manner, its long-eſtabliſhed character and rank in merit amongſt the Militia Corps; the more ſo, as theſe in general are certainly much improved, and as, from your laſt comparative accounts, I had great reaſon to believe that we were by no means in the claſs which we undoubtedly uſed to hold. I give you alſo, with great ſatisfaction, every degree of credit for the pains you have taken, and much joy of the ſucceſs with which they have been crowned.

You will excuſe my ſaying, at this time, a word more upon the contents of your letter. I ſhould be ſorry, in the moment of ſatisfaction and congratulation, to add what would ſcill ſuit with either; and you muſt pardon me for lamenting that, when you wrote, you ſeem not to have been of the ſame ſentiment. . . . . .

Ever, dear George,

Yours affectionately,

(Signed) RIVERS.

I am myſelf ſo heartily tired of this diſtreſſing employment, and I fear ſo much the tiring of you likewiſe, my dear Sirs, that I will give you no more trouble, unleſs ultimately I ſhould find it neceſſary to produce the *whole* of what it was never my intention even to hint at. The very unwarrantable challenge, by engaging you to take up and anſwer my letter to him, with his own ſtrange letter on that occaſion, ſeem indeed to call for *all* I can ſay in my juſtification: but I can refrain; and I hope that you will begin to ſee that you may poſſibly have been deceived and miſtaken.

My letter to him,* which I received yeſterday from Captain Bingham, I will return when copied; but as it requires no haſte, I will reſt a little; and the rather, as I believe I ſhall find it neceſſary to accompany that letter with ſome material explanation of ſome parts of it:—that done, I ſhall hope to reſt in peace. Suffer me, however, before I conclude, to take a liberty, which I certainly ſhould avoid with men of your age, experience, and good ſenſe, were I not, unfortunately, a much better judge of the propriety and neceſſity of it than any of you can poſſibly be. That liberty is, to offer my friendly advice that you would proceed in the buſineſs you have engaged in, with *great caution*. With *me*, believe me, you are perfectly ſafe, as I know exactly how to eſtimate your conduct and your intentions: but I muſt repeat, that the manner in which you have been involved in this matter, is unjuſtifiable and dangerous. Do me the juſtice, I intreat you, not to ſuppoſe me endeavouring to detach you from the intereſt you have eſpouſed: on the contrary, it is very evident, as I fear you will one day know, that nothing can be ſo favourable to *my* cauſe, as your continuing to countenance the cauſe you ſeem hitherto to have favoured.

I am, &c. &c.

(Signed) RIVERS.

N° VIII.

To the Right Honourable Lord Rivers.

Brighton, September 29, 1793.

MY LORD,

WE perceive, with great regret, and with no inconſiderable degree of ſurpriſe, that your Lordſhip ſeems little inclined to give credit to the teſtimony of ſix Officers, who muſt be ſuppoſed to be unprejudiced and impartial, being by no means perſonally intereſted in the queſtion; and we really

* Firſt letter, of September 7.

really did flatter ourſelves that we poſſeſſed a greater ſhare of your Lordſhip's confidence.—We have, from the firſt, confined our obſervations to one point, which is within our own knowledge; and we adhere to our former declaration, that we know of no inſtance of the Major's having treated Captain Tayler with inſult, or in a ſupercilious manner, either before the men, or at any other time or place; and we may venture to affirm, that this, if enquired into, would be found to be the opinion of every Officer in the Regiment.

We write with freedom. We owe it to ourſelves, as well as to a perſon whom we think undeſervedly accuſed: but, we truſt, our expreſſions are guarded, and perfectly reſpectful. We do not mean to criminate any one, nor to decide between the merits of any letters; though, from what we have ſeen of the Major's exertions, we have reaſon to think differently from your Lordſhip with reſpect to his letter of the 14th of July, and we are much concerned that it ſhould appear to you in ſo unfavourable a light.

We lament extremely that this unpleaſant buſineſs ſhould have taken place; and ſhall rejoice to learn that a reconciliation has been effected, and that perfect harmony is reſtored between all parties; but we muſt beg to decline any farther interference on this diſagreeable ſubject.

We have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's faithful and obedient Servants,

(*Signed*) Richᵈ Bingham,
Geo. Glyn,
W. M. Pitt,
E. M. Pleydell, jun.
J. Bastard,
W. Hodges.

No IX.

From Lord Rivers to the Captains.

Saliſbury, October 9, 1793.

DEAR SIRS,

YOUR letter of the 29th September overtook me at this place, in my way to Ruſhmore Lodge. My conſtant occupations there, and the reluctance with which I take up the pen on this diſtreſſing ſubject, prevented my acknowledging it from thence; and I ſeize a vacant moment at my inn, to ſay, that the letter before me tends only to increaſe my ſurpriſe and very deep concern.

I give you every degree of "confidence for what *you* know," and ſurely have a right to claim it for what *I* know. On that alone is founded my letter to the Major, which I now return; and ſince he has thought fit, and you have conſented that it ſhould be thus publicly taken up, I muſt, as I am too well enabled, ſupport it in the ſame way.

Some months are paſſed ſince I engaged Lord Amherſt to obtain for me His Majeſty's permiſſion to reſign a command, of which neither my age nor health permitted me any longer to perform the duty. I was very graciouſly deſired to retain the command, without doing the duty. Circumſtanced as I now unfortunately am, differing in ſentiments not only with the Captains, but, as they tell me, with "every Officer in the Regiment," and ſtanding *alone*, as the Major wiſely predicted, I flatter myſelf that my reſignation in ſo very untoward a predicament will at length be graciouſly accepted.

I remain, dear Sirs,

&c. &c. &c.

(Signed) RIVERS.

P. S.

Popham Lane.

P. S. After I had written the above at Saliſbury, I received there a letter from Mr. Morris, with an account of the deſtination of the Regiment for the winter, at which I am very ſincerely concerned, however little it will now affect *me* perſonally. I hope you received Sir William Fawcett's anſwer to my application, which I incloſed to you the moment I received it. I can only add, that I ſhall ever retain a warm affection for a Corps with which I have been intimately connected from its birth; and grieve that it is not more in my power to ſucceed in ſeconding its wiſhes. In this I am, no doubt, regarded as another "cypher," if not "impediment;" but I could have wiſhed to have been permitted to *diſmiſs myſelf*, in a manner a little leſs diſgraceful; and am angry with myſelf for not comprehending, at the time, the whole force of that ominous letter*, which, almoſt as ſoon as we were embodied, and upon the moſt trifling occaſion, conveyed to me the very unexpected notice, "that the Officers could not "but ſuppoſe I looked upon them as almoſt in a ſtate of mutiny." I ſincerely wiſh that this "diſagreeable buſineſs," as you now very properly perceive it to be, may end with nothing more ſerious to the Corps than the loſs of a very inſignificant Colonel.

N° X.

To the Right Honourable Lord Rivers.

Brighton Camp, October 13, 1793.

MY LORD,

IT is with much concern that we learn from your Lordſhip's letter of the 9th of October, your intention of reſigning the command of this Regiment; and we ſtill hope that, upon further deliberation, you will be induced to change that reſolution. We are all very ſenſible of the happineſs we have experienced

* From Captain Pitt.

experienced under your Lordſhip's command, and we ſhould be ſincerely ſorry to have any change. We flatter ourſelves, therefore, that you will acquieſce in his Majeſty's wiſhes.

We can aſſure your Lordſhip, we never could have preſumed even to give an opinion on any other matters in diſpute between yourſelf and the Major; but we have from the beginning endeavoured ſtrictly to adhere to the point within our own knowledge, on which ſubject we cannot but ſuppoſe your Lordſhip has been misinformed; and conſequently we thought it our duty, as well towards your Lordſhip as towards the Major, to deliver our ſentiments upon it.

We feel much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken to procure us the Wincheſter quarters; but as thoſe endeavours have been unſucceſsful, we hope we ſhall not find our preſent deſtination either inconvenient to the Regiment, or diſagreeable to any of the Officers.

Captain Pleydell and Captain Hodges have leave from the Duke of Richmond, and are at this time abſent from the Regiment.

We have the honour to be, with the greateſt reſpect and regard,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient humble Servants,

(Signed) RICHD BINGHAM,
GEO. GLYN,
W. M. PITT,
J. BASTARD.

Nº XI.

N° XI.

From Lord Rivers to Captain W. M. Pitt.

London, Oct. 21, 1793.
Sent 25.

DEAR WILLIAM,

IT was my intention to have fulfilled my promiſe of anſwering both your private and the laſt public letter received from the Captains; but it has not yet been in my power to perform the intention I mentioned in my laſt.*

Upon reading again your laſt, my ſurpriſe increaſes with my examination of its contents. What can I have been guilty of, my dear William, that can occaſion, not only your thinking me the firſt of ideots, and the moſt unnatural of unjuſt fathers, but your telling me ſo? But ſuffer me to examine the whole of your letter; though I proteſt that I am ready to ſink under the conſideration of theſe complicated attacks (for they are nothing leſs), and dread the taking up my pen upon any part of them, though I feel the abſolute neceſſity of it in defence of my character as a father, as the Colonel of a Regiment that has ever been reſpectable, and as a man of common juſtice, candour, and liberality.

It is to the firſt of thoſe characters that I am to confine myſelf in this letter; and if you are really conſcious of feeling for me that "perfect affection" which you repeat in ſuch ſtrong terms, it cannot ſurely be too much to expect that you would, for half an hour, ſuſpend that conſtant hurry of buſineſs, which is ſeldom compatible with ſedate thought and reflection, to conſider calmly, whether it may not be *poſſible* at leaſt, that you may be egregiouſly and dangerouſly miſtaken in the object you have ſo warmly taken up. Your own character, as a man of ſenſe, candour, and prudence, is, believe

* Some letters had paſſed between Captain W. M. Pitt and Lord Rivers, which, on account of their private nature, it is thought proper to omit. As the greateſt part of this letter relates to the buſineſs in queſtion, and is declared to be public, it is neceſſary to inſert it in the correſpondence.

believe me, as much at ſtake as mine is as a good father, or that of your friend as a good ſon.

Connected as you and I are in blood, and as we have ever been in friendſhip, which it has been my conſtant wiſh and endeavour to cultivate and ſtrengthen, I will not conceal from you, that your ſignature to certain public letters has excited ſomething more than the ſurpriſe of every perſon who has hitherto ſeen this correſpondence. The regard and eſteem I have invariably expreſſed and felt for the reſt of the gentlemen who have alſo ſigned, prevent my entertaining the ſmalleſt inclination to detach you from your common cauſe; but as the buſineſs cannot poſſibly end here (I foretold it from the beginning), I do moſt heartily wiſh that you had reſiſted the importunities, in favour of our relationſhip, which muſt have been uſed to obtain your ſignature. As it is, you are reduced to the diſtreſſing alternative, either of incurring univerſal blame for a very unprecedented and unwarranted ſtep, without due grounds; or of having aſſiſted in expoſing the unjuſt and reprehenſible conduct of your Colonel, the head of your family, who has rejoiced in giving you every teſtimony of his affection, and for whom you have profeſſed a perfect return of the ſame ſentiments.

But to your letter before me. It is utterly impoſſible to put any other conſtruction upon the ſubſtance of it, but that "your opinion and mine of "the conduct and affection of my ſon towards me are different," and that yours is certainly right;—that I am the dupe of the "groſs miſrepreſentations" of others, contrary to my own deareſt intereſt and wiſhes;—and that "you repeat what you have taken the liberty of ſaying before," that I know nothing of what it is quite impoſſible that any body ſhould know ſo perfectly as myſelf. Bring the matter home, my dear William:—ſuppoſe yourſelf, for an inſtant, half murdered, and left in a ditch—what opinion would you conceive of a kind Samaritan, who, in order to heal your wounds, ſhould aſſert, "that he was confident that your enemies had been groſsly miſrepreſented," and that "a day would come when you would be convinced" that they had neither beaten nor abuſed you? What an opinion muſt that Samaritan entertain of his own ſuperiority and wonderful powers of rhetoric! and in what contempt muſt he hold the poor fool in the ditch!

Once

Once for all, let me tell you, that I *know* what I ſay, and much more; and that the friends and ſupporters of as ungrateful and undutiful a ſon as ever exiſted, would do well not to try any farther that extreme patience, which for ſo many miſerable years has ſtriven to conceal the fouleſt outrages. No man in his ſenſes would heſitate to credit this, who will candidly conſider this laſt outrage, that has occaſioned the preſent much-to-be-lamented correſpondence. His ſubmitting a letter from a juſtly-offended Father to the ſcrutiny of ſix Gentlemen (to ſay nothing of the contemptuous ſtyle in which he informed him of that treatment), would have been alone ſufficient (though a cypher in the account) to have baniſhed him for ever from the preſence of that father. And I muſt tell you, what none of you ſeem to be aware of, that a Major referring the conduct and ſentiments of his Colonel to the animadverſion and deciſion of the Officers under his command, is *guilty of direct mutiny*.

What thoſe Officers may incur, who actually ſit in judgment upon their Colonel, at the inſtigation of that Major, and proceed to the condemnation of his conduct, "not without due thought and deliberation," adding, "that "they owe it to themſelves thus to write with freedom"—I ſay, what thoſe Officers may incur, it is far from my wiſh to conſider. But no more.—Let this, however, be received as a full anſwer to the following ſentence in yours before me: "Perhaps *we* in this place may equally be miſunderſtood." I neither miſunderſtand the injuries received from your Major, nor your unfortunate error in endeavouring to ſupport him.

I have been ſo much employed in other matters ſince this letter was begun, that I have not had time to finiſh and copy it ſooner. It is now Friday the 25th; and at St. James's, on Wedneſday, I was ſworn into, and *confirmed* in an office,* the duties of which I *muſt* now perform to the beſt of my power. It is too evident that much remains to be ſettled after this unexpected ſhock; and when I am leſs agitated, I will write again. In the mean time, as no part of *this*, or of *your* letter, can for the future be ſecret, I muſt deſire you

* The Lieutenancy of the County.

to communicate it to the reſt of the Captains, and (as I ſuppoſe and hope he has ſeen all the reſt) to the Major.

I cannot conclude without an obſervation which your letter before me of the 14th very naturally ſuggeſts. " It grieved you" to communicate my determination* to the Major; and you ſay a great deal indeed in his juſtification, but not a ſingle word does he condeſcend to ſay for himſelf, importing either grief or juſtification. Does not that ſtrike you as rather extraordinary?

Though I find that I *muſt* retain the command of the Regiment as Colonel, I can never join it under my preſent circumſtances. Many and ſerious preliminaries muſt firſt be ſettled, upon which it will be impoſſible to enter in the very few days you remain in camp. According to the preſent regulations, ſome of the Captains muſt remain at quarters; and I muſt beg the favour of knowing, as ſoon as poſſible, to whom, and where I may direct my next letter upon this miſerable affair, in which, God knows, it was by no fault of *mine* that we are all ſo unhappily involved.

Once again, let it be remembered that this is a *public* letter.

I remain, dear William,

Yours very affectionately,

(Signed) RIVERS.

* Not to ſee him.

N° XII.

No XII.

To the Right Honourable Lord Rivers.

Guildford, Oct. 30, 1793.

MY DEAR LORD RIVERS,

WE left Camp on Monday, and arrived here this day, and our march was very pleaſant. I hope to be in town on Saturday, and will immediately call upon you.

Your letters of the 21ſt and 25th came ſafe to my hands; and I communicated them, according to your inſtructions, to the Captains preſent, viz. Captain Bingham, Sir George Glyn, and Captain Baſtard, and alſo to the Major. We can add nothing to the ſentiments already repeatedly expreſſed; but if you ſhould have any inclination to write again on this ſubject, letters may as uſual be directed to Captain Bingham.

I am, my dear Lord Rivers,

Yours very affectionately,

(Signed) W. M. PITT.

No XIII.

From Lord Rivers to the Captains.

London, Oct. 31, 1793.

DEAR SIRS,

I RECEIVED your obliging letter of the 13th, which conveys your kind intreaties that I would wave the intention I had for ſome time conceived, of retiring from the command of the Regiment, on account of my age and

 inability

inability to perform the duties of it. I ſhould not have ſo long deferred my acknowledgment of thoſe ſentiments, had I not prepared you for this delay in a letter to Captain Pitt, of the 15th. I doubt not his having communicated to you the contents of that letter, as well as of one of more moment, ſent the 25th.

Though it has fallen to the lot of few to encounter more diſtreſſes through the beſt and greateſt part of a long life, nothing has touched me more ſenſibly, every circumſtance conſidered, than a late event, in which you have been induced to take a very active part. Had I been ſo fortunate as to obtain leave to reſign my command before that event, all would have been well; but having encountered it, and being placed in a ſtill higher relation to the Regiment by the poſt which it has pleaſed His Majeſty to entruſt to my care, it is become my indiſpenſable duty to uſe my utmoſt endeavours to re-eſtabliſh that order which has received ſo ſevere a ſhock. The more effectually to accompliſh that good work, let me conjure you very earneſtly to lend your aſſiſtance in ſearching out and eradicating a very evident principle of miſchief that lurks ſomewhere, in order that the reſpectable old Corps may riſe again upon its ancient well-compacted foundation, on which it ſupported itſelf in great credit long before any of you, my dear Sirs, were connected with it, as well as ſince.

But before we proceed, let me conjure you not to imagine this matter to be taken up too ſeriouſly, or dwelt on too fully. I muſt perſevere in preſſing upon your minds the dangerous tendency of what has made its appearance amongſt us; and if the reputation and well-being, and, perhaps, the very exiſtence of the Corps are at ſtake, the cauſe of theſe evils cannot ſurely be too deeply probed, nor the remedy too aſſiduouſly adminiſtered. Let me therefore again beſpeak your patience and aſſiſtance, and intreat you to contemplate calmly the object that calls for them.

We ſee a Major ſubmitting his Colonel to the judgment of the Captains of his Regiment, and theſe accepting the commiſſion, trying, and condemning him; the ſame Major giving his Colonel to underſtand, by letter, that, unleſs he were juſt and candid enough to ſubſcribe to *his* opinion, he would

would ſtand *alone* in *his own*;* and the Captains, in another letter ſigned by all the ſix preſent, approving and corroborating this ſentiment, and even inſinuating that every Officer in the Regiment agreed in it. If this extraordinary ſketch required to be heightened, let it be remembered that this Major is the Son of his Colonel, and that not a ſingle actor in this piece could have been totally ignorant of that miſunderſtanding, of which this very act is a moſt glaring inſtance. But ſince it has been decreed that theſe private injuries, ſuffered hitherto with an unexampled degree of forbearance and patience, ſhould be thus forced into open day, this ſhall not be the place of their diſcuſſion; nor does the cauſe ſtand in need of ſuch an auxiliary, however irreſiſtible and damnatory.

In the above mere outline of this diſguſting picture, the chief object of it appears in his poſt of Major only; and if, in filling up that outline by the neceſſary retroſpect that follows of the whole tranſaction, he ſhould be brought forward in a more intereſting and affecting character, the utter impoſſibility of ſeparating the two relations in which he ſtands to his commanding Officer, muſt be evident to the plaineſt underſtanding. In other words, it is neither neceſſary nor intended to dwell on the conſtant perſecution of the laſt twenty years. Let what follows ſpeak for that and for itſelf.

My letter to him of September 7, which he thought fit ſo indignantly to throw to the Officers, as unworthy to be received or anſwered by himſelf, contained matter that it was incumbent on me, informed as I was, to enforce in the ſtrongeſt terms I could uſe; and that, as his friend only, independently of the other bonds which made it my duty. I cannot too often repeat, though you have conſtantly diſregarded the aſſertion, that his voluminous letters to me, which he has moſt ungenerouſly and falſely taxed me with having revealed, forced from me that letter. I will aſk the whole world, whether, under ſuch circumſtances, the contents of it merited the condemnation either of him or yourſelves. It contains "general truths, "levelled at nobody whoſe conſcience honeſtly and candidly tells him that "they cannot apply to him." Why did he ſo haſtily put on ſo unbecoming a cap, unleſs conſcious that it fitted? And be not offended if I aſk how that circumſtance happened to be overlooked, which would not only have prevented

* See page 16.

prevented his error (not to call it by a worſe name), but your involving yourſelves in it?

You have that letter of mine in the collection; and I will tranſcribe a ſmall part of his immediate anſwer. If I inſert but a ſhort extract from it, any candid well-tempered man, who reads the whole, will give me credit for my forbearance.

Brighton, Sunday, September 8, 1793.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have juſt received your letter of yeſterday; and as I judge it right the Officers ſhould ſee it, I have left it with Captain Bingham, to read and diſcuſs. He and the other Officers may anſwer it as they ſhall judge right.—All I have written, ſaid, or done by Captain Tayler, the whole world may ſee and hear (however I might with reaſon have ſaid, that private confidential correſpondence, uttering the unweighed, open, natural effuſions,* ought not to be thus divulged). . . . . .
I cannot anſwer your letter any other way; they may or may not anſwer it, as I have left it with them.

I am, &c.

(Signed) G. PITT.

Then follows a poſtſcript of three folio pages, of thoſe "unweighed, open, natural effuſions," which, notwithſtanding I am taxed with it, I cannot poſſibly tranſcribe. It is, however, worthy of ſome notice, that I am charged with divulging unfairly private and confidential letters, which I have *not* divulged, in the ſame page in which this preacher of candour ſcruples not boldly to ſay, "*he* judged it right that the Officers ſhould not only read and "diſcuſs a private letter from his Father and Colonel, but anſwer it likewiſe "as they ſhall judge right."—Would to Heaven that ſuch inconſiſtent and ill-founded charges, and ſuch unmerited abuſe, did not extend to matters of

* When "unweighed, open, natural effuſions," are fraught with defamation, and injurious to a meritorious character in his profeſſion;—when they are calculated to diſturb the peace of the perſon to whom they are addreſſed, and contribute only to the indulgence and increaſe of the irritable diſpoſition that conceives them; it is ſurely the part of a kind friend to correct that unfortunate propenſity. This is all that the Father has been guilty of. Upon what principle he can thus be called to account, and counteracted, in this branch of his duty, is not eaſy to comprehend.

of infinitely more moment!——But ſince we are upon the ſubject of this Gentleman, it is proper you ſhould be informed that, notwithſtanding you had ſo kindly undertaken to be the channel of our correſpondence, he thought fit to write to me alſo himſelf. I received his letter at Portſmouth, and ſent it him back unopened by the ſame poſt, September 19, with the following lines in the cover:

> "Since you have thought fit to begin a correſpondence with me through the channel "of the principal Officers of the Regiment, you muſt permit me to reject any kind of "intercourſe with yourſelf," &c.

Upon the 25th of the ſame month, he made another attempt; and as the letter was addreſſed in another hand, I naturally opened the cover. As the four pages were quite full, it was impoſſible for me not immediately to know the hand, or even to avoid reading a few words that happened firſt to preſent themſelves without unfolding the paper. They were theſe: "Put your Son "and Captain Tayler by the ears, and I hope you will be ſatisfied."—I immediately placed the whole in a cover unread, telling him, that "if the "Captains thought fit to convey to me, from him, ſuch accuſations as *that*, "I ſhould know in what manner to receive them; that thoſe few words "were all I had read of his letter, and that I deſired to be troubled with "nothing more under his hand;" or ſomething to that purpoſe.

It ſhould ſeem that whatever this worthy Gentleman ſays, writes, or does, muſt be perfectly right, and conſequently that I muſt be wrong in the ſame degree; and, upon this wiſe and candid principle, I may be blamed for not receiving his letters. When he himſelf ſet the example of renouncing the correſpondenee by the moſt illiberal, rebellious, and mutinous act, that a Son and an inferior Officer could be guilty of, *muſt* his Father and his Colonel run the hazard of receiving freſh inſults under his hand? Could it be expected that a letter contained any marks of contrition, in which ſuch an atrocious inſinuation immediately preſented itſelf to the reader? If there be any danger of his "being by the ears" (as he calls it) with Captain Tayler, muſt it not evidently proceed from himſelf, and his own unjuſtifiable language concerning him? and can there be a ſtronger proof of his conſciouſneſs of this truth, and of the danger he had incurred by it, than this

this unpardonable attempt to lay it to the account of his father? If any thing could add to the atrocity of ſuch an attempt, it is not only the aſſurance of addreſſing it to his father perſonally, but daring to tax him with feeling "ſatisfaction" at ſo unnatural a conduct.—Ought he not, in that candour which is always on his lips, to have ſubmitted that letter to thoſe Gentlemen who have run ſuch riſks in his cauſe? and would you have conveyed to me a paper containing ſuch accuſations?—No: you muſt begin to ſee, however late, what a character you have undertaken to countenance and protect: I ſay, you cannot but perceive, by his own confeſſion, what his treatment of Captain Tayler's character muſt have rendered him liable to; and you cannot but acquit me of the infernal charge compriſed in the few words above quoted. Read again, let me intreat you, my letter to him, which, "upon due thought and deliberation," you thought fit to condemn, as an "undeſerved cenſure;" and conſider if it be not calculated to prevent, by the moſt forcible remonſtrance, that very danger which he dares to tax me with running him into. And let me farther intreat you to aſk yourſelves how very cautiouſly I muſt have avoided the leaſt intimation of the foul abuſe I received from poſt to poſt, when I obtained that gentleman-like letter from Captain Tayler,* which you have ſeen; and what muſt be in the heart of that Son, which can thus prompt him to blacken the character of ſuch a Father! But I moſt devoutly thank God, that this will be no longer in his power. This laſt deed of his, rendered public by the manner in which you have ſeconded him (and public it muſt be), will and muſt open the eyes of the long-deluded world.

I cannot ſuppreſs, in this place, a piece of information which came to me yeſterday from a man of the firſt rank and conſequence; that an Officer of the Dorſetſhire (naming nobody) had very lately aſſured a friend of his, who could not but ſuppoſe it true, that the Major's allowance, or annuity, was not paid him, but withheld, or ſomething to that effect. This Nobleman, who knew my preſent ſtrange ſituation, was aſtoniſhed at the peculiarity of it, and could not, he ſaid, but ſuppoſe that ſome other prejudices, beſide that condemned letter, muſt have aſſiſted in producing it. He then gave the

* See page 14.

the above intelligence, and very properly confeſſed that he had met with the ſame, or reports of the ſame tendency, very often, and long ago.—From whom can ſuch execrable falſeholds proceed, but from the man whoſe annuity is thus withheld? But I have long had in my poſſeſſion a letter from a perſon, to whom this honeſt gentleman aſſerted the ſame thing, knowing perfectly that whenever he drew upon Meſſrs. Farrer, his draughts were conſtantly paid, to the amount of £.1000 *per annum*, independent of what his mother has found her account in allowing him for the abominable calumnies he has, for many years, ſo ſucceſsfully and gratefully ſpread to the deſtruction of my reputation.

Were this the time and place to dwell upon theſe enormities, it would be eaſy to ſwell the account of them tenfold; but it muſt not be forgotten, that this gentleman, whoſe ſupplies are ſo cruelly withheld, has, beſide his £.1000 *per annum* regularly paid, received, for the payment of debts and other uſes, within theſe twelve years, more than £.11,000, as may at any time be ſhewn. His income has alſo been increaſed, upon the death of Sir James Stonhouſe, by another £.1000, as a pure gift; but as he has been known very kindly to ſay that he was entitled to it, and that it was no gift, it is highly juſt he ſhould *feel* how far this aſſertion is true.

But this laſt piece of intelligence has occaſioned my dwelling longer upon this character than was my intention. It makes too evident an ingredient in the diſagreeable buſineſs in hand, nor is it poſſible to ſeparate it.

In reſuming our recapitulation, I cannot expreſs the ſurpriſe and concern I felt at the receipt of your firſt letter, of September 11; by which I perceived, very contrary to my hopes and expectations, that you had taken upon you "to diſcuſs and anſwer" mine to the Major. If my anſwer to that letter of yours procured an explanation in your reply of September 16, that gave me ſome reaſon to hope that the firſt appearance of this ſtorm would ſoon diſſipate, I was very ſadly diſappointed in thoſe hopes by your next in my collection of September 29. With the moſt anxious deſire of aſſiſting to diſſipate that threatening ſtorm, I thought it highly juſt to the

parties, between whom you had undertaken to judge, as well as fair towards you, to give you ſome inſight into the conduct and diſpoſitions of thoſe parties; nor could I contrive a more equitable mode of effecting it, than by ſending you a ſpecimen of the correſpondence of each, written before *the event*, and conſequently without deſign.* I will not conceal, that your anſwer of September 29† very effectually opened my eyes, and ruined my fond hopes of a better underſtanding. In that letter you expreſs (not in the gentleſt terms) "much ſurpriſe that I do not give more credit to *your teſtimony*" than to *my own certain knowledge*; and appear ſomewhat offended that I do not place "a greater ſhare of confidence" in *your negative* than in *my own poſitive* argument. You tell *me*, that you *do not know* that the Major has conducted himſelf improperly towards the Adjutant—and I believe you. I tell *you*, and that repeatedly, that *I do know* that he *has*; and, in anſwer, you very kindly repeat your original ſentence, with ſome aggravation, and tell me, that I have "undeſervedly *accuſed*" the Major. Whoever wrote that letter, my good friends, was rather an angry than an acute logician. He proceeds to diſclaim all "deciſion between the merits of any letters," and immediately decides in favour of that from the Major (how fairly, let thoſe judge who can read), though it contains a groſs inſult towards his Father and Colonel, and, moreover, a palpable inſtance of that abuſive treatment of the Adjutant, which I am ſtigmatiſed for believing, in contradiction to "the teſtimony of ſix Officers, who muſt be ſuppoſed to be unprejudiced and impartial."—"We lament extremely," ſays this writer, "that this unpleaſant buſineſs ſhould have taken place;" . . . . "but we muſt beg to decline any farther interference in this diſagreeable ſubject." This deſire is certainly very natural, but, now, not quite ſo feaſible. Who it was that brought on "this unpleaſant and lamentable buſineſs," I know not; but if it be really a manœuvre of the Major's own invention, and if, at his word of command, you have wheeled backwards into this brake of brambles, you will require ſome aſſiſtance to diſentangle you. This, my dear Sirs, I will lend with all my heart, if you will accept of it; but I cannot do it alone, nor without your own very ſincere and earneſt endeavours to ſecond mine.

In

* See page 13.

† See page 18.

In another part of this letter of yours before me, you ſay "you do not mean to criminate any one." Theſe words, if I may be allowed to interpret them, appear to open a very rough field of hard and ſerious labour. If I miſtake them not, they contain the *pivot* upon which the whole of this mis-ſhapen and irregular wheel muſt ultimately turn.

To write intelligibly, this *pivot* is the Adjutant of the Dorſetſhire Militia, who is eſteemed a very agreeable and pleaſant man, in a brown coat; and who in that dreſs has proved himſelf a very able man of buſineſs, with talents and aſſiduity, that have been of eſſential ſervice to Government and the Public, as many in office and power are ready to atteſt.

Having, from his experience and knowledge in the ſervice, every reaſon to expect in him an excellent Adjutant, both in a military and civil capacity, as a tactician and a man of buſineſs and order, I prevailed on him to accept that office, to the apparent ſatisfaction of the whole Corps, and at my private expence of an adequate annuity for his life to the then Adjutant, who was avowedly unequal to the undertaking. From his entering upon his office in the Dorſetſhire Militia, ſoon after it was embodied in the laſt war, to this day, I declare I never knew him derogate from the above deſcription; nor, as far as my knowledge goes, has he ever failed in what forms the character of a man, a gentleman, a man of ability, and an excellent adjutant: I ſay as far as my knowledge goes—and I do moſt earneſtly intreat you, Gentlemen, and the whole Corps of Officers, individually or conjointly, to ſpecify under your ſignatures, as you have written to me, whatever you may know of Captain Tayler that militates againſt the character I have given him.

The Major ſcruples not to aſſert, that the Adjutant is "a cypher, and an impediment," in a letter to me under his hand; and ſix Captains of the Regiment, by ſeconding and ſupporting that letter, have virtually avowed the ſame opinion under their ſignatures. Theſe are vague and unſubſtantial accuſations; very evident indications of ill-will, but not of any inclination

to come forward like men really aggrieved, with effectual and palpable charges.

Ever ready to prefer the wiſhes of the Officers to my own, where juſtice and the claims of others do not oppoſe themſelves, I profeſs myſelf, as I have often ſaid, willing to ſecond their deſires upon the preſent occaſion, if they will enable me ſo to do. If therefore the Major will ſo far condeſcend to alleviate my preſent embarraſsment, as to convert the above accuſations into a ſpecific charge, I will very ſincerely aſſiſt in bringing this long-depending queſtion to a deciſion. He aſſerts, that the Adjutant is a cypher and an impediment. It is certainly in his power, as I have ſaid before, to make his Adjutant a cypher, by employing others to do his duty; and as long as he retains his commiſſion, he muſt be an impediment to ſuch meaſures. So far the Major's aſſertion may be true: but if it is meant as a charge, the term *cypher* muſt be underſtood as importing arrant incapacity to perform the duty of Adjutant; and *impediment*, to import a wilful obſtruction of the exertions of thoſe who poſſeſs ſuperior abilities to perform thoſe functions. You, Gentlemen, in your letter of September 29, very evidently eſpouſe the Major's ſentiments, by expreſſing your approbation of his letter above mentioned: you will therefore permit me to intreat the ſame favour of you, either collectively or ſeparately; and I faithfully promiſe to aſſiſt in bringing the matter to a fair iſſue, whenever you will produce, in the form of a real and ſubſtantial charge, thoſe vague accuſations in the Major's letter, which you evidently appear to have ſanctioned by your approbation. My intention, however, is not to confine you to thoſe articles; but I moſt ſincerely invite you and the whole Corps of Officers to give me a fair occaſion of proving my inclination to conſult your deſires, by bringing forward ſome crimination that may put an end to this teaſing and diſgraceful buſineſs by a fair trial. I gave it as my honeſt opinion, very early in this correſpondence, that you had rendered ſuch a meaſure quite inevitable by ſo formal an interference in favour of one party, and in direct oppoſition to another, though unheard and totally miſunderſtood.

I muſt once more intreat your forgiveneſs for taking up ſo much of your time; but perceiving the preſſing neceſſity of being very explicit upon this moſt

moſt material article, I cannot avoid what may have the appearance of prolixity. I have not, moreover, leiſure to write otherwiſe than rapidly, nor by any means to ſhorten and compreſs what I feel it, for ſo many weighty reaſons, indiſpenſably incumbent on me to enforce. Let me intreat you, my dear Sirs, to reflect with a little calm attention upon the ſtrange predicament under which I am ſo ſuddenly, and, I hope, undeſervedly placed. From the manner in which the Adjutant has from week to week been repreſented to me (the terms muſt be concealed), I ought to conclude him, very contrary to my own opinion, totally unfit for his office. If I remonſtrate againſt the language in which theſe repreſentations are conveyed, and the evident inveteracy attending them, I am reprehended by thoſe to whom theſe remonſtrances were not addreſſed, and charged with being guilty of "undeſerved cenſure"—in another word, with injuſtice. If the repreſentations mean any thing, attention to them muſt be expected; and if I take them up in the way the leaſt offenſive, I am taxed by the Major with attempting to foment quarrels between him and the Adjutant, and with feeling "ſatisfaction" at his (my ſon's) riſking his life. If I apply to the Captains who openly and warmly eſpouſe the ſentiments of the Major, and if I ſolicit that ſpecific accuſation againſt the Adjutant, without which I cannot proceed in the attainment of their views, I am told that "they mean not to criminate any one." If I join in the condemnation of the Adjutant, without any cauſe, I not only act contrary to my duty and to juſtice, but a deſpicable part, for which I ſhould merit the contempt of the whole Regiment; and if I do not thus join, I incur the diſpleaſure, and ſomething too like the cenſure of the Officers. Reflect, let me again intreat, upon the peculiarity of this ſituation; and aſk yourſelves ſeparately, how you would act under ſuch circumſtances. Aſk yourſelves, at the ſame time, by what means I am thus circumſtanced, and whether it be from any miſconduct of my own.

But there remains, for our ſerious conſideration, an object of more perplexity and importance. How is this confuſion to be reſtored to order? How are the functions of the Regiment, how the duty expected from it, to be carried on under ſuch ſymptoms of diſſatisfaction and ill-temper, in ſuch a ſtate

a ſtate of licence and miſrule?—And, firſt, let me aſk *you*, Sir, who, with the temporary command, ought to have given the example of good order, to have enforced the neceſſity of harmony and good underſtanding, and to have ſupported and protected the Staff in the due execution of their duty—let me, I ſay, aſk, why *you* are the firſt to fill folio ſheets of ſuch complaints as could not be maintained, and, at length, to force from me thoſe remonſtrances which you could neither brook nor anſwer?—Inform me by what inſtigation, and under what ſiniſter influence, you dared to appeal to Officers under your command for the condemnation of your abſent Colonel. Declare from what incentive you were led to betray ſo ſhameful an ignorance of your duty, ſo unprincipled a diſregard of the ſervice, as ſo completely to render inefficient, and to ſacrifice to the ill-temper of the moment, a Regiment ſo able and ſo ready to ſerve their country!

But to return to yourſelves, my good Sirs, and to reſume a little temperate reaſoning.—You aſſure me, that you did not mean to interfere between a Father and his Son; and I do moſt ſincerely believe it, as I have already ſaid, and do heartily acquit you of any intention of encouraging the Son againſt the Father, being incapable of conceiving that opinion of you. But whatever your intention may have been, the fact is evidently ſo.* If you will calmly conſider the turn and ſtyle of my letter to the Major, you will find it to be utterly impoſſible that it could have been addreſſed to any but a Son, or ſome near relation, who, in the opinion of the writer, required that ſpecies of advice. And you may aſk yourſelves ſeparately, whether any commanding Officer in his ſenſes could have written ſuch a letter to one of you, had you been his Major only, and not his Son. The turn of the whole is moral; and I know better than any body, and to my ſevere coſt, that there does not exiſt a man who has afforded more reaſon for ſuch a letter. Whatever there may be in it of a military tendency, relates to the duty of a commanding Officer to ſupport his Adjutant in *his*, inſtead of uſing every means of

* If theſe Gentlemen had known their Major better, they would have been aſſured that this was his intention.

of diſcouraging and impeding, by taking all opportunities of refuſing him that merit which may be his due. This advice alſo proceeded *from my own certain knowledge*, from what I myſelf had obſerved, and from folios of evidence in my own poſſeſſion, and not from any foreign information. To this cogent and *poſitive* argument in favour of my remonſtrance, you oppoſe a negative one, aſſerting you do *not* know that the Major has incurred the neceſſity of ſuch advice. To this aſſertion I give moſt ample credit; but can it deſtroy my own poſitive knowledge? and have I not an equal claim to credit with yourſelves? I am ſure, my dear Sirs, that you cannot in conſcience refuſe it me. Upon thoſe facts alone reſts that letter, for which I am cenſured, and which would never have been ſubmitted to *your* animadverſion, had it not been founded on ſuch truths as he knew you to be unacquainted with, and himſelf unable to anſwer.

From this unjuſtifiable conduct in him—from that fact alone I immediately ſaw, and I ſtill ſee, the imminent danger of the ruin of the Regiment; I do therefore moſt cordially invite you, my dear Sirs, from the affection you bear to that Regiment, from the ardent intereſt which I know you feel in the honour and credit of it, nay, from the attachment I know you have to the ſervice and to your country (which at this critical moment requires the exertion of all its force), to aſſiſt with your utmoſt endeavours to avert the misfortune which very evidently threatens the firſt in age, and ſurely not the laſt in merit, of the Regiments of Militia, upon which the ſafety of this country at preſent depends. I ſolemnly bind myſelf to do all in my power (conſiſtently with my preſent ſituation, which it is my peculiar duty to ſupport) to ſecond this good work. Believe me, it will be difficult and arduous, and require the utmoſt ſtretch of temper, prudence, and even wiſdom; but, however anxiouſly reſolved I am to exert whatever I may poſſeſs of thoſe qualities, I ſhall find my ſhare unequal to the taſk, unleſs it be aided by yours.

To produce this deſirable effect, we muſt all diveſt ourſelves of every degree of prejudice, and examine attentively the original ſource from whence the miſchief flows; and I muſt again claim your patience in what ſurely

cannot

cannot appear tedious, when ſo ſerious an intereſt calls for the moſt minute inveſtigation. I ſay, from whence this miſchief flows; whether it be from the impropriety of my letter to the Major—from his caſting it to you, "to diſcuſs and anſwer"—or from your acceptance of that commiſſion. Nothing can be more evident than that the ſcrutiny of the firſt of theſe articles muſt induce that direct interference between a Father and his Son, which you repeatedly and very properly diſavow. As a Father, I felt it to be my duty to expreſs thoſe ſentiments which fill that letter; and if to my certain knowledge my Son had amply incurred them, I know not where reſides that power on earth that can call me to an account for them. You, Gentlemen, diſclaim it:—if, therefore, I am not accountable to any man for the private advice I give to my Son, that letter of mine, compoſed of nothing elſe, cannot, from any "impropriety in it, be the ſource of the preſent miſchief," and ſhould be out of the queſtion.

The Major's ſubmitting that letter to be "diſcuſſed and anſwered" by you, and your undertaking that office, are the other two articles. I confeſs myſelf too deeply intereſted in the deciſion, to pretend ultimately to pronounce upon them. I have, indeed, delivered *my opinion* freely; and I repeat that, in the Major's place, I could not have acted as he did; nor would I have engaged myſelf in what was evidently his own peculiar buſineſs, had I been one of you. But my opinion can be no rule, nor ought I to give judgment upon theſe two eſſential articles, till I receive my own acquittal. I am at the bar, not on the bench. But I do moſt earneſtly recommend it to you all, privately to take the opinion of your moſt ſenſible friends, as I confeſs that I have done, and ultimately to refer this delicate queſtion to ſome very competent and reſpectable arbitration. Such arbitrators, upon a matter of that real importance which I perceived this to be, the moment I received your firſt letter, ſhould be men of conſequence, perfect maſters of the queſtion, and capable of judging of the relation in which we all ſtand to each other. Should it be aſked what the reſult can be of ſuch an arbitration, ſince the event which it is to conſider has already taken place? I anſwer, to remove, as far as poſſible, the bad conſequences of that event, and to reſtore the Regiment to a good underſtanding, by convincing of their error,

whichever

whichever of the parties concerned may be found to have erred. Such arbitrators will alſo judge of the extreme perplexity to which I am reduced by the event in queſtion, both as His Majeſty's Lieutenant, and as the Colonel of the Regiment. I cannot perſuade myſelf that this was foreſeen by any of the actors in this buſineſs; but I feel its exiſtence to an alarming degree, nor can I yet perceive by what poſſible means I can be relieved from it. Whether I have incurred this perplexity by any improper conduct of my own, or whether I have been reduced to it by the conduct of others, will be the object of the arbitration propoſed; and I confeſs myſelf unable to deviſe a more promiſing remedy for the preſent evil, however ready I am to conſent to any other plan which may be thought more effectual.

Some bad deſign to embroil and injure our Corps, ſeems to have exiſted ſomewhere; and as this diſcovery cannot be the province of ſuch an arbitration, I do moſt earneſtly conjure you, my dear Sirs, diligently to aſſiſt in it. Such a deſign cannot have been conceived by any amongſt ourſelves: it appears to be the work of ſome miſchievous mind, envious of the credit of the Corps, and of that laudable harmony which has exiſted, with very trifling interruptions, from the formation of it. We have often experienced ſuch attempts upon the privates; and the ſame ſpirit may have actuated ſome, and operated upon others of a higher rank. At all events, you, Gentlemen, muſt be the only judges of this material queſtion; and I do moſt earneſtly hope, for the ſake of the future happineſs, if not of the very exiſtence of the Corps, that you will conſider it with attention.

Though every degree of reſpect is paid to the ſentiments of the ſix Gentlemen concerned, it may be permitted to aſſert the impoſſibility that they ſhould all at once have ſtarted, like one man, into the ſame reſolution. One muſt have taken the lead, however ſteadily they may all have adhered to the ſame opinion; nor could ſix perſons write one letter. It is with all deference that I throw out this ſentiment: but as the Gentleman who muſt thus have made the firſt propoſal, cannot but be ſenſible of that foreign influence which I perſiſt in ſuſpecting, I am convinced that he will not ſcruple to

diſcloſe it for all our ſakes, as far as we have the well-being and happineſs of the Regiment at heart.

And now, my dear Sirs, if the painful concern inſeparable from the ſituation in which I am thus placed—if the miſery reſulting from the ſucceſs of my bitter enemies, in deceiving the world and my friends into the ſupport of their unnatural and cruel machinations, ſhould have forced from me any intemperate expreſſions, I may plead what I have moſt heartily granted to you, that it is not my "intention" to offend. Nay, if conſtant and unexampled ingratitude, in return for an uninterrupted ſeries of kindneſs, forgiveneſs, and generoſity—if the falſeſt calumnies have been artfully propagated to deſtroy that reputation, the ſupport of which is the firſt duty of the calumniators themſelves—a man under ſuch a trial may be pardoned at leaſt, if his ſtyle ſhould partake of the nature of his ſufferings. Such they are; and it is no longer in his power to conceal them. When ſo inſidious an attempt is made to engage ſo many undeſigning and reſpectable perſons in the public protection of ſuch characters, their detection becomes a public duty. There exiſts in the univerſe but one ſpirit from which ſuch principles can emanate; and to that ſpirit alone muſt be left their protection.

I remain, with ſincere regard and eſteem,

Dear Sirs, &c. &c.

(Signed) RIVERS.

The

The following Letter appears to have been cauſed by the continued ſilence in conſequence of the laſt long Letter of Lord Rivers to the Captains, of the 31ſt of October, 1793.

No XIV.

From Lord Rivers to Captain W. M. Pitt.

Hertford-Street, March 1, 1794.

DEAR WILLIAM,

IF you go to-day to Guildford, as I was informed you intend, could you engage Captain Bingham to come to town for one day towards the end of the enſuing week? If you do not go, do you object to writing a line, and ſettling ſuch an interview?

Something muſt be agreed upon, and ſome method taken of re-ſettling (if ſuch a labour be poſſible) our *diſorganiſed* Regiment; and you muſt allow me to add, ſomething is alſo neceſſary to reinſtate in the public opinion the reputation of a man who is pretty generally vilified and taxed with *injuſtice*, even in that county with which he has, for a long ſeries of years, endeavoured to maintain the faireſt character and the moſt cordial connexion. His patience and temper are not inconſiderable; but he has too much ſpirit to remain longer under ſuch a ſtigma.

Our firſt converſation ſhould be confined to a few choſen. I fear it will be impoſſible to prevent farther publicity.

Ever affectionately yours,

(Signed) RIVERS.

Nº XV.

To the Right Honourable Lord Rivers.

Guildford, March 2, 1794.

MY LORD,

WE take the earlieſt opportunity which a meeting of the Captains affords us, of taking into conſideration your Lordſhip's laſt letter, the contents of which could not be very pleaſing to us. We lament as well the continuance of diſpleaſure, which is ſo evident from many expreſſions in that letter, as the little probability there is of removing it by a continuation of the correſpondence. After the moſt full examination of our own conduct, we really find no cauſe to blame ourſelves for any thing that has paſſed; that conduct was dictated by the ſole motive of doing juſtice to one who, in our opinion, had been miſrepreſented to you; and being called upon to give our teſtimony, we flattered ourſelves we were alſo acting a friendly part towards your Lordſhip. If your Lordſhip ſhould be ſtill of opinion that we are culpable, relying on the purity of our motives, we are ready to meet a public enquiry; but not being conſcious of any improper interference, we cannot think there are grounds for our conſenting to a private reference.

We are, my Lord,

With great reſpect,

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient humble Servants,

(Signed)

RICHᴰ BINGHAM,
GEO. GLYN,
W. M. PITT,
E. M. PLEYDELL, jun.
J. BASTARD.*

* It may be neceſſary to obſerve, in this place, as the dates of the reſignations are not recollected, that three of the Captains reſigned between the time at which this letter is dated, and the concluſion of the correſpondence. Theſe reſignations appear to have been occaſioned by ill health, and the urgency of their private affairs.

Nº XVI.

N° XVI.

From Lord Rivers to the Captains.

March 20, 1794.

DEAR SIRS,

OBSERVING that it is your wiſh to diſcontinue the correſpondence, and having myſelf every reaſon to be ſatisfied (the whole of the tranſaction being on paper), I am happy to comply with your inclinations. The diſtreſſing conſequences of that irreparable and public family-breach, which, but for this unfortunate interference, might have been delayed, if not totally avoided, is what chiefly remains to be lamented.

Not to dwell longer upon ſo diſagreeable a ſubject, I will proceed at once to the principal cauſe of troubling you with this letter at this time.

Captain Tayler, who has at length a proſpect of having his abilities and integrity rewarded by a fixed ſettlement, has applied to me for leave to ſell his Adjutancy. To have conſented to his *reſignation*, ſo near the period of ſervice that would entitle him to his pay for life, or indeed to have permitted it without an ample and public juſtification of his conduct, I will candidly confeſs to have been far from my intention. To his preſent application I have aſſented; and in purſuance of the conſtant attention I have paid to the inclinations of the Regiment, to which I have ever been ſo cordially attached, I now make you, my dear Sirs, the offer of procuring the Adjutant of your choice, if you can find one who will incline to purchaſe, either from his own fund, or by your aſſiſtance.

Having prevailed on Captain Tayler to ſuſpend a negociation upon this buſineſs till I ſhall have obtained your determination, I hope you will return as ſpeedy an anſwer as the nature of the ſubject will admit.

I remain, with much regard,

My dear Sirs,

Your very faithful and obedient Servant,

(Signed) RIVERS.

N° XVII.

To the Right Honourable Lord Rivers.

Guildford, March 23, 1794.

MY LORD,

WE have the honour of acknowledging your Lordſhip's letter of the 20th inſtant, and thank you for having complied with our wiſh of dropping the ſubject of our late correſpondence. We hope that, this diſagreeable buſineſs being at an end, we ſhall have the pleaſure of ſeeing your Lordſhip again with the Regiment, when it may ſuit your convenience, and not interfere with your other avocations.

With reſpect to your very obliging offer concerning the Adjutancy, we have no particular perſon whom we can take the liberty of recommending. We return you our beſt thanks for your kind intention, and have no doubt but Captain Tayler will offer a proper perſon for your Lordſhip's approbation as his ſucceſſor.

We have the honour to be, with great reſpect,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's faithful and obedient Servants,

(Signed) RICHᴰ BINGHAM,
GEO. GLYN,
W. M. PITT.

N° XVIII.

N° XVIII.

From Lord Rivers to the Captains.

London, April 12, 1794.

DEAR SIRS,

IN conformity to my conſtant wiſh of conſulting the inclinations of the Officers, in whatever may concern them, I tranſmit to you two notes with the character of Captain Biſſett, who is to ſucceed Captain Tayler in the Adjutancy of the Dorſet. I have heard the beſt accounts of him from other hands, and ſhall be extremely happy if he ſhould have the good fortune to be agreeable to the Corps.

I will take this opportunity of acknowledging the favour of your obliging letter of the 23d of March. You having expreſſed a wiſh to "drop the correſpondence upon the diſagreeable buſineſs which has lately been the ſubject of it," I cannot have the ſmalleſt objection to comply with it. I moſt ſincerely wiſh that I could as eaſily agree that "the buſineſs was at an end" with the correſpondence. The unavoidable and irremediable conſequences of that buſineſs I ſhall never ceaſe to lament; and I grieve to add, that they will not permit me to expect the poſſibility of the happineſs of joining the Regiment.*

However great my concern is upon this occaſion, it would be much increaſed were I to loſe the friendſhip of the Gentlemen who have ſigned the letter

* After ſuch a declaration at this period of the correſpondence, what room exiſted for the ſuppoſition, upon which ſuch ſtreſs has been ſince repeatedly laid, that the whole matter was "dropped?"

letter before me. What may have happened upon a public occaſion, ſhould not neceſſarily diſturb private connexions; and I am not ſo far deficient in the gift of diſcrimination, as not to be deſirous, my dear Sirs, that you ſhould agree with me in the above ſentiment.

I am, with much regard,

Yours, &c. &c.

(Signed) RIVERS.

LETTERS

BETWEEN

THE COLONEL

AND

SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

OF THE

DORSETSHIRE MILITIA.

PART II.

IN conſequence of the requeſt of the Captains, in the Spring of 1794, "that this correſpondence ſhould be dropped," no documents of any intercourſe appear till the commencement of the year 1795; nor was any inclination teſtified by thoſe Gentlemen, to come into any meaſure that might tend to the re-ſettlement of the confuſed ſtate of the Regiment. About that time, Major Pitt being perſuaded, by the opinion of his friends, that he had acted at leaſt imprudently by appealing to the Captains, and ſubmitting to their diſcuſſion his Father's letter of September 7, 1793, applied to Captain Pitt for a written confeſſion that he had been the adviſer of that meaſure. In conſequence of that application, the Major obtained a letter from Captain Pitt, dated the 19th of February, 1795, which, with thoſe that follow in the ſame year, upon that and other ſubjects, forms the Second Part of this Work.

No I.

*Captain W. M. Pitt to Major Pitt.**

Arlington-Street, Feb. 19, 1795.

DEAR GEORGE,

UNPLEASANT in the extreme as the ſituation is in which I am about to place myſelf, yet I think I cannot, with any degree of fairneſs or honour, refuſe you what you aſk, namely, that I ſhould acknowledge that *I* adviſed you to lay one of your Father's letters before the ſix ſenior Officers then preſent with the Regiment, for their opinion on the charge brought againſt you in that letter; and I do moſt certainly acknowledge that I did ſo. Whether ſuch advice was good or bad, it may be thought preſumptuous for me to declare; but it is no more than that juſtice which I owe to myſelf and my own character, in this letter, in which I ſo directly admit having given the advice, that I ſhould alſo ſtate the light in which I now, after more than twelve months have elapſed, and after due and mature reflection, ſtill conſider the ſubject in diſpute, and make mention of my motives and preſent feelings. I mean to pay you no compliment; nor will any dread of the reſentment of your opponent cauſe me to abſtain from ſaying what I really think on this matter. It is but fair firſt to mention that the diſpute between you and him did not originate with you; his conduct at Blandford, before you joined the Regiment, was much diſapproved of by the commanding Officer at that time; and the juſt grounds of that diſapprobation were admitted by all the Captains who were with the Regiment, and, generally, by all the Officers; for the truth of which I refer to them all, but more eſpecially to the Lieutenants Fox, King, and Aſhley, becauſe they have all long

* Though this letter was not addreſſed to Lord Rivers, it would be a ſad compliment to the candour of its author, to make any apology for adopting his own maxim by inſerting it. If the advice to a Son to expoſe a private letter from his Father be juſtified, it would be unfair to conceal a letter containing that juſtification.

long ſince left the Regiment. What we diſliked in him was, that he affected a contempt for every thing which the zeal of any of us cauſed to be propoſed; that in our opinion he neglected to bring forward the men; in which opinion we are juſtified by the character given of the Regiment at Portſmouth by General Hyde, three or four months, or more, after we were embodied; and that, forgetting his own ſituation, as well as omitting the duties of that ſituation, he ſeemed determined to graſp at the entire command of the Regiment. In this ſtate you found us, when the Lieutenant-Colonel went home, and you ſucceeded to the command; and the contention then lay with you. And now I muſt cenſure *you*; and you will recollect it is not the firſt time I have mentioned it. I think you were extremely to blame in writing thoſe letters to your Father, full of complaints againſt the perſon in queſtion, eſpecially when you perceived that it anſwered no good purpoſe, but gave Lord Rivers offence. That you had cauſe to be vexed is perfectly known to the whole Regiment; but much good might poſſibly have been done, and much evil certainly prevented, if, inſtead of that aggravating correſpondence, you had reaſoned the matter over quietly with Captain Tayler, well weighed your orders, and then coolly but firmly enforced them, and he would ſcarcely have ventured to diſobey them; if he had, the line to be followed was plain. In the mean while he had frequent opportunities of ſtating his own caſe; and the reſult ſeems to have been, that *he* was believed, and that you were not. I underſtood from you, that your Father's correſpondence, during a period of ſeveral months, contained many accuſations againſt you, as to your regimental conduct and your behaviour towards Captain Tayler, which you felt to be void of foundation; that you endeavoured to juſtify yourſelf, and that there again you did not gain credit. When the letter firſt alluded to arrived, you called me into your tent; you lamented the total diſbelief with which your Father treated every attempt you made to clear yourſelf, and to diſprove the charges alledged againſt you. You aſked me my opinion of your behaviour towards Captain Tayler, and what I would do in your caſe. The ſubſtance of my anſwer I recollect moſt perfectly, I might almoſt ſay the very words of it. "That, in my opinion, "thoſe charges were unfounded; that you had been miſrepreſented and "unjuſtly accuſed to your Father; that, were I ſo circumſtanced, and was "my veracity doubted by my Father, though I carried the idea of filial duty

" as far as any man breathing, yet that I ſhould think it but juſtice to myſelf, " and to my Father alſo, to take the moſt effectual means of eſtabliſhing, " beyond a doubt, the truth of what I had aſſerted; that I would for that " purpoſe call in the evidence of ſeveral impartial diſintereſted by-ſtanders, " lay their teſtimony before my Father, and that there could not be a doubt " but perfect conviction muſt attend ſuch a meaſure." *—On this opinion you acted; and notwithſtanding all the diſagreeable conſequences which have ſince ariſen, ſo convinced am I ſtill of the propriety of the advice, that, ſuppoſing another caſe of the ſame ſort to exiſt, and my thoughts upon it to be aſked, I could think of no better mode of proceeding. Lord Rivers ſays, that the charges againſt you, and the reproof given, were not in his military, but in his parental character. There is nothing in that letter but what appeared to us to allude to the diſpute between you and Captain Tayler: on that diſpute we, the ſix Captains, alone gave our teſtimony, and to that ſingle point we have ſince inviolably adhered. My objects were theſe: to re-eſtabliſh, by that teſtimony, which I ſhould have ſuppoſed irreſiſtible, the character of one I thought undeſervedly cenſured; and to effect, by convincing Lord Rivers of your innocence, a reconciliation between the Father and the Son.† Perhaps other views may have been imputed to me

* In the beginning of the correſpondence with the Captains, in their ſecond letter to the Colonel, and *ſigned by the Writer of this*, they diſclaim, in the ſtrongeſt terms, the ſmalleſt interference between the Father and the Son. Is not, however, this advice, directed to a Son, whoſe idea of "*filial duty*" is to be regulated by that of his adviſer, interfering between thoſe relations?—What muſt the mind have felt that received this advice, when perfectly conſcious that no ſuch "charges" had ever exiſted; that no "miſrepreſentations or accuſations" whatever had been made, and conſequently no aſſertion in contradiction of them? And how could "the evidence of ſeveral impartial diſintereſted by-ſtanders be called in," to diſprove what had never been alledged? NEAR TWELVE MONTHS AFTER THE FOLLOWING ANSWER TO THIS LETTER WAS WRITTEN, MAJOR PITT DECLARED, BOTH VERBALLY AND UNDER HIS HAND, THAT HE NEVER BROUGHT SUCH A CHARGE AGAINST CAPTAIN TAYLER, NOR EVER THOUGHT HIM CAPABLE OF WHAT IS HERE ALLEDGED;—AND YET WE ARE TOLD THAT "ON THAT ADVICE HE ACTED!!!"

† This could hardly be the "object" of this adviſer, for "reconciliation" implies a previous rupture. No rupture had taken place till occaſioned by this very advice; how then could it be intended "to effect a reconciliation?" It very naturally indeed, and completely "effected" a *rupture!*

me (but ſuch imputations are entitled to no anſwer, but ſhould be met with perfect contempt); ſuch as a wiſh to drive Captain Tayler out of the Regiment by perſecution, to make way to my friend Mr. King, or other ſuch abſurdities. Captain Tayler and I were never on bad terms; on the contrary, were cordial: and often have I been ſo much his friend in the Regiment, as to have prevented many unpleaſing things being ſaid to him. But I do not mean to claim any merit from it. The wiſh to conciliate, to ſerve others, and keep men friends, has alone involved me in theſe troubleſome matters. Captain Tayler repreſented me once to Lord Rivers as interfering where I had no buſineſs. That appearance may have been owing partly to my wiſh (and that only when deſired to do ſo) to contribute my mite on every occaſion to advance the good of the Regiment, and partly to the diſlike Colonel Michel had to writing, which made him employ me at Blandford as his amanuenſis. From Lord Rivers downwards, I have often been conſulted* in the Regiment, and perhaps by no man more than by Captain Tayler himſelf. It is rather unreaſonable then to urge this againſt me.

I have endeavoured to introduce the whole buſineſs into this letter, that if, at any future time, you ſhould wiſh to make any farther uſe of it, my conduct and my motives may clearly appear. To conclude:—Your juſtification, where I thought you injured, as I have before ſaid, and a hope of being inſtrumental in reſtoring you to your Father's affection, have been my ſole objects. There is nothing I would not do, to reſtore harmony between you; and there is no ſubmiſſion I would not adviſe you to make, to attain that object, except acknowledging yourſelf guilty, where you are convinced you are innocent.

I am, dear George,

Yours very affectionately,

(Signed) W. M. PITT.

* To preſs advice unaſked, and "to be conſulted," are widely different.

No II.

N° II.

Extract of a Letter to Captain Pitt.

Hertford-Street, Feb. 23, 1795.

DEAR WILLIAM,

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . IT was my intention to have troubled you with a letter, in conſequence of our converſation of yeſterday, and of the letter you wrote to Major Pitt a few days ago, a copy of which you communicated to me. What paſſes in perſonal interviews and *verbal* communications, is ſo liable to be miſunderſtood, and ſo much danger may enſue from ſuch miſapprehenſions, that, in matters of ſuch ſerious importance, I never can be at my eaſe till I have fully explained myſelf and my ſentiments upon paper.

Before you began to read me your letter to the Major, I prepared you for no interruption on my part, reſolved not to make any obſervations or objections that might tend to interrupt that temperate and friendly mode of inveſtigation which we both ſeemed inclined to purſue, much I aſſure you to my ſincere ſatisfaction.

Fearing that my ſilence may have been miſtaken for acquieſcence, and that you may have conceived that I did not diſſent from the import of the letter in queſtion; I muſt take the liberty of aſſuring you (and I ſhould be guilty of duplicity if I concealed it), that I cannot ſubſcribe to the greateſt part of what I recollect of that letter: I am perſuaded that you did not expect that I ſhould. For, with the ſame candour with which you communicated it, you deſired, if I miſtake not, that I would not receive it as an intended juſtification of the propriety of your whole conduct in this buſineſs, but purely as your own opinion of that conduct, which you fairly declared

declared that you ſhould repeat, were you again to be placed in the ſame predicament.

This declaration was candid and manly; and I ſhould depart from thoſe qualities, if I did not confeſs, as I have repeatedly aſſerted, that I am totally of a different opinion.

Having thus entered my proteſt, ſolely to obviate any poſſibility of being miſunderſtood, either by yourſelf, the Major, or any other perſon concerned, I will venture to intreat the indulgence of re-conſidering the letter in queſtion, upon which, if you permit, I will convey my ſentiments in exactly the ſame friendly temper in which we have lately converſed.

Believe me, dear William,

Yours very affectionately,

(Signed) RIVERS.

N° III.

To Captain William Morton Pitt.

Stratfieldſay, April 30, 1795.

DEAR WILLIAM,

YOUR letter of the 19th of February to Major Pitt is before me; and I am very ſenſible of the candour and fairneſs which have induced you to leave it in my poſſeſſion, to which, however, the perfect openneſs of my own conduct has entitled me.

At the concluſion of your letter, you tell the Major that "you have "endeavoured to introduce the whole buſineſs into it; that if, at any future "time,

" time, he ſhould wiſh to make any farther uſe of it, your conduct and " your motives may clearly appear."

I will follow your example, for the ſame reaſon; and if it ſhould occaſion my letter to be of an extraordinary length, you will, I am perſuaded, perceive the neceſſity, under my untoward circumſtances, that I ſhould be very explicit and circumſtantial.

I am, at this moment, ſuffering under ſevere accuſations; and as, from my early youth to a very advanced age, it has been my conſtant endeavour to avoid offences of this nature, by avoiding to give offence to others, I cannot but feel moſt ſenſibly the pain of my ſituation, and be ſolicitous to remove it, at the riſk of being prolix and tedious in my juſtification.

For this purpoſe I ſhall conſider the different parts of your letter to your Couſin with perfect temper and impartiality, and with that ſtrict adherence to ſacred truth, which, however great your own devotion to it may be, I fear you do not always exact from ſome in whom you ſeem to place confidence.

To begin with the firſt paragraph of your letter.—I ſhall never ceaſe to wonder at a circumſtance, by which you ſeem to be totally unmoved—I mean the very unfavourable appearance of an application to you, to relieve your correſpondent from the unpromiſing conſequences of a meaſure, in which, you ſay, that he himſelf engaged you. If my letter, which he communicated to you, was founded in injuſtice, he could need no protection againſt it; and he could not afford a ſtronger proof of his conſciouſneſs of the reverſe, than by thus obtaining your own conſent to abide the conſequences of that deluſion into which he had led you. I have ſufficient proofs that he was perfectly ſenſible of the juſtice of my letter, which he knew you could not be. What then could be his intentions towards you, or his opinion of your ſentiments, when he ſolicited your ſupport under his pretended injuries, and brought upon his Father and Colonel, through your advice, the avowed and public diſapprobation of ſo many of his friends, the principal Officers of his Regiment? But to what purpoſe are theſe reflections, when you have ſo freely confeſſed the advice you gave, and that you would repeat the ſame on any ſimilar occaſion?

In

In the ſequel of your letter I obſerve, and really with much pleaſure, that you expreſs your ſentiments without any reſerve, and that you treat mine and my conduct with the utmoſt freedom. I repeat, that I am ſincerely pleaſed with this circumſtance, not only becauſe I love that my actions ſhould be thus ſcrutiniſed, but becauſe it ſets me a good example.

It is but juſtice to ſuppoſe that you approve of what you practiſe; and that you will be pleaſed with the ſame treatment from me, not only as a friend, but, in the caſe before us, as a man at the head of a Regiment, who, by ſome extraordinary means, is called upon by the Officers of his Corps, to come forward in his own juſtification. Even in that character and that predicament, it is my wiſh to be on a footing perfectly equal, and my ſincere deſire that the queſtion may be liable to no bias but that of truth.

As a military man, I am inclined to think this degree of condeſcenſion reprehenſible; but ſince it ſeems to be your opinion that, in our humble Militia ſyſtem, ſuch punctilios may be diſregarded, whatever my thoughts or ſenſations may be on the occaſion, I will accede to your own terms.

Almoſt the whole of your letter to the Major relates to what you ſometimes call "a diſpute," and ſometimes "a contention" between him and the Adjutant. Theſe, you ſay, "did not originate with the Major, as the conduct "of the latter was much diſapproved of, at Blandford, by Colonel Michell; "and that the juſt grounds of that diſapprobation were admitted by all the "Captains who were with the Regiment, and, generally, by all the Officers; "for the truth of which you refer to them all."—This appears to me to be rather a bold aſſertion; and, however confident you may be of its truth, I doubt whether all theſe Gentlemen would be ready to ſupport it. Do you not recollect to have been preſent, when, during the laſt war, I was repeatedly under the neceſſity of calling together the whole Corps of Officers, to diſcover the grounds of the ſame diſcontents? and though Tayler was purpoſely excluded, can you name any Officer who, upon any of theſe occaſions, ever uttered a word of complaint againſt him, though invited in the faireſt and moſt candid terms? Have you not often heard me ſay, that, entreated by the Major to go to Portſmouth, in order "to put this Adjutant on his duty,"

I appointed an interview between them, at which the Lieutenant-Colonel (who had been a long time confined by indiſpoſition) was engaged by the Major to be preſent—I ſay, have you forgotten that, at that interview, neither of the Field-Officers had the ſmalleſt objection to offer againſt any part of the Adjutant's conduct, but concluded it by a fair and voluntary confeſſion that they thought him as good an Adjutant as any in the ſervice? Can you, after theſe two inſtances, wonder, that I ſhould doubt whether *all* theſe Officers would be ready to abide by what you venture thus to aſſert for them? and have I not great reaſon to conclude, that theſe "diſlikes," "diſputes," and "contentions," have no other foundation than what I ſhall avoid naming?

It is true, that you lay to this Adjutant's charge "an affected contempt "for every thing which the zeal of any of you cauſed to be propoſed;—and "that, forgetting his own ſituation, and omitting the duties of that ſituation, "he ſeemed determined to graſp at the entire command of the Regiment."—Suffer me to aſk, my dear William, and however it may ſound, I aſk it in perfect calmneſs, and becauſe no other language is left me to uſe, whether it is the province of "any of you" to propoſe, when you have a Field-Officer at your head? and whether they who ſo far really forget their own ſituations, are not themſelves "graſping at command," and guilty of what they lay at the door of the Adjutant?—Let me aſk too, whether it be the duty of an Adjutant to attend to ſuch propoſals from ſubordinate Officers, or, if he be conſcious of a knowledge in his own profeſſion ſuperior to his adviſers, it can or ought to be his inclination? It requires no extraordinary ſhare of underſtanding to anſwer theſe queſtions; and, when conſidered, very little penetration to trace the ſource of all theſe "diſlikes," diſputes," and "contentions."

I ſolemnly declare that it grieves me to be thus forced to employ terms which, if you can do juſtice to my character and diſpoſition, you muſt know to be repugnant to both. I ſay to be thus forced; for this part of your letter, in which is "introduced the whole buſineſs," and in which "your conduct and motives are clearly to appear," obliges me to tell you, and ſo does my duty as your Colonel, that you appear to have totally miſtaken the line

line of conduct annexed to the rank you hold in the Regiment.—During the preſence of a Field-Officer, no Captain can have any right to interfere with the Adjutant, except in the ſingle article of his roſter, the regularity of which concerns the youngeſt Enſign, as much as the eldeſt Captain. In every other branch of his duty, none but the Officer commanding ought to interfere; and if that Officer knows how to command, none will. From the ignorance or the neglect of this truth, all the unhappy differences that have diſtracted our Regiment have evidently reſulted; and though I have ever clearly ſeen the ſource of the miſchief, it is not my inclination to dwell upon it, any more than it was in my power, when abſent, to prevent it.

The Adjutant is alſo charged with "neglecting to bring forward the men; "in which opinion you are juſtified by the character given of the Regiment "at Portſmouth by General Hyde, three or four months after you were "embodied."—Let us candidly conſider what could be done with the men at Blandford, during thoſe months, under the total ignorance of the new ſyſtem of field-duty, which at that time pervaded the whole Militia of the kingdom, all the Adjutants included. Captain Tayler was therefore wiſe, in not attempting to inſtruct the men in that which he was ſenſible would require more trouble in teaching them to forget. When General Hyde obſerved to the Major, that the Regiment was deficient, I know him too well to doubt his acquieſcence in ſuch a reaſon, if the Major had had the recollection to urge it. You will not, I am ſure, aſſert, that the Adjutant would have neglected the diſcipline of the Regiment, had not that total alteration of ſyſtem been ordered. This charge, therefore, is palpably groundleſs, and, were I inclined to be ſevere, I ſhould add vexatious. Major Tayler is too much a man, and a man of ſenſe, to pretend to what is not in his power. He could not teach what he had never been in the way of knowing; and he was the firſt to propoſe that aſſiſtance ſhould be obtained from two Serjeants of the Sixty-ninth; and to thoſe Serjeants the Regiment was evidently indebted for the reputation it ſo ſpeedily regained.

We now come to matters of a more ſerious nature, and accuſations of much greater importance; ſince the Adjutant is taxed with injurious miſ-repreſentations of the Major to his Father and his Colonel, who, on his

part alſo, is flatly told, that he gave credit to the Adjutant, and refuſed it to his Son.

It muſt be very evident to us all, that the unfortunate predicament under which we and the whole Regiment are placed, reſults entirely from the fallacious notions, either inſtilled into, or conceived by yourſelf and the reſt of the Officers, relative to the above accuſations. I ſay conceived by yourſelves; for, extraordinary as it may appear, the Major has never exhibited any thing like ſuch accuſations in any of his letters to me; and though they are full of complaints againſt the Adjutant, he has no where attempted to lay to his charge ſuch injurious miſrepreſentations. Such an aggravating charge would not have been omitted, could it have been ſupported.

I am ſorry to ſay, the only anſwer that can poſſibly be made to theſe allegations cannot but be offenſive; nor is it in my power, however deſirous I may be, to avoid that offence. It is then incumbent on me to declare, upon my ſacred word of honour, that not a tittle of theſe allegations is true;* and I do ſolemnly proteſt, that I never heard a word from Captain Tayler to the diſadvantage of the Major (but the reverſe) till the morning of September 7, 1793, when I wrote that letter, of which ſo unfortunate and ſo unjuſtifiable an uſe has been made.

You may perhaps be ſurpriſed to hear, that almoſt immediately after my return from Portſmouth, and the interview between the Field-Officers and the Adjutant (when he was allowed by both to be among the beſt), the ſame violent complaints of him recommenced, and continued till the above date. Notwithſtanding the perfect ſilence of Captain Tayler (let me entreat you to turn to his letter to me, of March 13, 1793, in my correſpondence with the Captains), I could not conceive it poſſible that complaints of that violent nature ſhould exiſt without his having ſome knowledge of their cauſe; and therefore, on the morning above mentioned, I did peremptorily inſiſt upon his telling me if matters proceeded as he could wiſh with the com-

* Is it not extraordinary, that, after this ſolemn declaration, theſe Gentlemen ſhould perſiſt in adhering to their original ſentiments, even ſo late as at their laſt meeting at Kingſton-Houſe?—See Captain Pitt's letter of March 19, 1796.

commanding Officer. He then, for the firſt time, as I have already declared, did confeſs that the Major, when commanding the Regiment in the field, was apt to rebuke him undeſervedly whenever he approached to make any obſervations;—that when he ſaw him coming, he ſometimes turned abruptly, —aſked him if he had any thing to ſay—told him that he did not want him, and that he put him out. This, I again proteſt, was the firſt and only inſtance of any thing like a complaint againſt the Major, amongſt many of praiſe and commendation; and it is too like that unpleaſant diſpoſition, not to be recogniſed.

Is there then any room for taxing Captain Tayler with "ſeizing frequent opportunities of ſtating his own caſe," or any juſtice towards me in aſſerting "that he was believed, and the Major was not?" Complaints that never were made, could not be believed; and, on the other hand, would it not be cruel, my dear William, to force from me the diſtreſſing reaſons for refuſing credit to thoſe that *were* made? This inſinuation, painful as it muſt be to a Father thus forced upon his defence, I am ready to ſupport, by ſeveral letters in my poſſeſſion, often contradictory of each other, and aſſerting what I myſelf know to be perfectly unfounded: what claim then to credit can there be on that ſide? In the ſame packet of correſpondence, are ſome of my own letters, that will prove to you and the Gentlemen concerned, whenever you pleaſe to read them, how far the following quotation from your letter to the Major is founded—"I underſtood from you, that your Father's "correſpondence, during a period of ſeveral months, contained many accu-"ſations againſt you, as to your regimental conduct, and your behaviour "towards Captain Tayler, which you felt to be void of foundation;—that "you endeavoured to juſtify yourſelf, and that there again you did not gain "credit." Here again ſuffer me to repreſs the only anſwer that can be made to what is above alledged, and to refer you to thoſe letters of my own, above alluded to, and to any other which he may have to ſupport that poſition. That I have gently remonſtrated, as became a friend and a father, againſt the temper and improper violence with which he expreſſed himſelf in his letters upon the ſubject of the Adjutant, I ſhould be ſorry to deny, becauſe that was my duty; but I again declare, that I neither found, nor ever thought I had reaſon to find fault with his "regimental conduct, nor with

with his perſonal behaviour to Captain Tayler," before the letter in queſtion. What room then was there for his "juſtifying himſelf?" and, conſequently, how could I "refuſe him" credit?

In exactly the ſame unfortunate ſpirit, which ſurely I have more reaſon to lament and to dread than any other man living, *the* fatal letter was communicated to you, with "lamentations at the total diſbelief with which "his Father treated every attempt he made to clear himſelf, and to diſprove "the charges alledged againſt him."

I have already declared, upon that which I hold as ſacred as an oath, that nothing ever *was* alledged againſt him; and, conſequently, any attempt to clear himſelf muſt have been abſolutely impoſſible. In other words, no ſuch allegations were made to me; I could not therefore tax him with them, nor could he attempt to clear himſelf. What an unnatural, what a deplorable gratification, to hazard his own reputation rather than not fully that of his Father!—Reflect on that miſerable truth—weigh well, what I have ſo ſolemnly denied, and then aſk yourſelf, upon what could be founded the opinion and the advice which you avow to have given him, upon his communication of my letter. Even if he had not miſled you by what I cannot name, I muſt take upon me to ſay, that your advice was haſty, unwarrantable, and dangerous. In ſtrictneſs, you ought not even to have read the letter, offered, as you knew it to be, in the ſpirit of complaint againſt a Father. Having read it, the kindeſt and wiſeſt advice would have been, that he ſhould have aſked his Father's permiſſion to appeal to the Captains for his juſtification. So far you would have been warranted, even under your deluſion; but after what I have ſo ſolemnly aſſerted (if *nothing more* could be urged for the neceſſity of my letter), you muſt begin to doubt at leaſt of the propriety of your conduct, as well as that of the other Captains—more I dare not ſay. You have declared that you would repeat the ſame advice, under the ſame circumſtances; and it is needleſs for me to combat your opinion. All I ſhall add is, that all "the evidence of the impartial and diſintereſted by-ſtanders" could never avail againſt that of my own perfect knowledge of thoſe unfortunate facts which extorted from me the remonſtrances

ſtrances in that letter, and of which none of thoſe by-ſtanders could have any cogniſance.

Involved as my cauſe evidently is with that of Major Tayler, through the whole of what has been ſaid, I have hitherto chiefly attended to *his* exculpation. I have now to attend to my own.—If I had given the Adjutant "frequent opportunities of ſtating his own caſe, had given credit to "him, and diſbelieved the Major; if, through a correſpondence of ſeveral "months, I had accuſed my Son of failing in his regimental conduct, and "in his behaviour towards Captain Tayler, and had refuſed him credit "when he endeavoured to juſtify himſelf;" I muſt have acted the part of a blind, weak, and prejudiced dupe to the one, and of a moſt unjuſt and unnatural father to the other. Of this, however, I am accuſed; and this is the diſgraceful, if not the deteſtable character, under which I appear in the letter before me. Judge not, let me entreat you, of the temper in which I write this, from the force of the expreſſion, nor of my ſenſations, from the affecting nature of the charge. Perfectly conſcious of not having merited ſuch imputations, I bear them with that calm patience which, for a long ſeries of years, I have had ſuch frequent opportunities of exerciſing.

Though I bluſh at being thus reduced to the ſtate of a culprit, pleading in his juſtification, there may be thoſe who expect it from me; and to thoſe I ſhall offer the ſame irrefragable truths, and the ſame ſolemn aſſeverations, to which I have been reduced in the exculpation of Major Tayler. Linked in the ſame ſhameful chain of calumny, what unfetters the one, will diſcharge the other. But let me entreat you ſeriouſly to conſider, whether my juſtification be all that is neceſſary, and whether no reparation is due to the character of a man connected with you all by ſuch various and intereſting ties, after having been brought to, and condemned at your bar, for a conduct of which you ought to have known him to be totally incapable.

It is neither my intention, nor my province, to ſay more upon this material point, except that I ſhall never ceaſe to look upon it as abſolutely indiſpenſable. Circumſtanced as Major Tayler at preſent is, and free from any

any riſk of diſturbing or being diſturbed in the Regiment, the ſame can neither be neceſſary nor deſired by him.

As, however, he has been repreſented, and by ſome I fear believed, to have created ſerious miſunderſtandings in the Corps; and as it cannot be doubted that the reflections beſtowed on me, proceed from my conſtant ſupport of him; I owe it to myſelf, as well as to him, to ſay upon what grounds I thought him entitled to that ſupport.

When I firſt engaged Captain Tayler to take upon him the office of Adjutant to the Dorſetſhire Regiment, I had reaſon to believe, what long experience amply confirmed, that he was perfectly capable of the undertaking—well acquainted with every circumſtance of the interior management of a Regiment, and an excellent tactician. To theſe qualities were added, what I flattered myſelf muſt have rendered ſuch an Adjutant particularly agreeable in ſuch a Corps, the birth, the education, the knowledge, and the manners of a Gentleman. In farther addition to theſe advantages (an eſſential one to a young Regiment), he was well acquainted with the civil or official economy of the Army, and acknowledged, in the chief offices of Government, to be a *real* and very *uſeful* man of buſineſs. As ſuch he is very generally regarded, and reſpected by all thoſe who have experienced and are capable of judging of his merit; nor is there an Officer more univerſally eſteemed in the Army, for his abilities, his aſſiduity, his gentlemanly conduct, his friendly ſervices, and his ſenſe of honour.

So far his general character, in which I know I ſhall be ſupported; nor can I fear contradiction reſpecting his particular conduct in the Dorſet, whilſt I advance only what I myſelf experienced;—that was, a conſtant attention to his duty, great readineſs and intelligence in the diſpatch of his buſineſs, with a proper degree of conſideration for the inclination as well as the orders of his Colonel. If I experienced this degree of attention, it was becauſe I knew his deſerts, and was never wanting in that conduct towards him which a Gentleman is entitled to. Had he always been thus treated, I am perſuaded he would have thus returned it; nor is it juſt to condemn

condemn the ill-temper of any man, without a candid examination of that temper which excites it. Public men, however ſtudious not to offend, are too often the objects of that diſpoſition; and what I plead for my friend Tayler, I, on this occaſion, am made to feel for myſelf.

Comparing this character with that you have given of the ſame perſon, the contraſt will be ſtriking. Both cannot be juſt; and one of us muſt be egregiouſly miſtaken. If the error be mine, it is, thank God, the error of good temper and charity; and in that cauſe I would rather "ſtand *alone*," according to the Major's kind ſentence, than in the moſt weighty *combination* in its oppoſite. Whether, in ſhort, the dart be intended for Tayler, through my ſide, or for me through his, is of little moment. It is "*telum imbelle* "*ſine ictu*;" and, falling as ſuch to the ground, ought not perhaps to have occaſioned the trouble of ſo much writing.

And now, my dear William, I muſt again lament the length of this letter, whilſt I beſpeak your patience for much more ſerious matter which preſſes for admiſſion.

I profeſs, you know, to follow your prudent example, in committing to paper fully and explicitly the motives of my conduct; and as I would not omit any circumſtance that may be neceſſary for the full information of yourſelf, the Major, and the Officers concerned, and ſeveral others who may be implicated, if not materially affected by this event, it is in ſome ſort my duty to give you, as well as myſelf, this trouble. I believe I have already made ſome apology upon this occaſion; but I now repeat it, becauſe it occurs to me at this moment that I ought to ſay much more than I at firſt intended.

Let us then attend patiently to a little calm argument, which may ſhew the danger of acting precipitately, in matters of moment, from the firſt impulſe; and, however it may be received, it is propoſed as much for my own conſideration as for yours. It is hardly to be expected, that perſons of whatever rank in underſtanding ſhould give themſelves the trouble of conſidering intenſely the poſſible reſult of the advice they offer in the

affairs of others. You, for example, have been guided by this firſt haſty impulſe in the advice you have avowed. Others, with the very beſt intention, are acting from the ſame inviting impulſe, to effectuate a ſudden reconciliation between me and my Son; and were I, with all my ſad experience, to liſten to my own impulſe, I ſhould embrace that deſirable object as haſtily as you ſeem to have engaged in what ultimately has occaſioned the rupture.

You ſtand foremoſt of the above actors; and as I am ſo nearly affected by that impulſe which ſo inſtantaneouſly operated upon you, I truſt you will have the candour to expect that I ſhall freely deliver my opinion on that ſubject more circumſtantially.

After what I have already ſaid in ſeveral parts of this letter, and after the declaration that has been painfully extorted from me, of the abſolute want of truth in the repreſentations you liſtened to, can you deny, without taxing me with abominable falſehood, that you have acted under a moſt dangerous deluſion, and have unguardedly given way to a fatal impulſe that threatens the moſt ſerious conſequences? That you embraced the deceit wilfully, is next to impoſſible; but that you did it haſtily and imprudently, is too evident. I muſt add, that it appears alſo next to impoſſible that the reſult of your advice ſhould not be foreſeen; and though you repeatedly advance, that your intention was to reconcile me to my Son, it is hard to conceive how that could be effectuated by adviſing ſo ſignal an outrage. You aſſert, however, that the intention was kind, and as ſuch it muſt be received, but not ſurely as the reſult of forethought or prudence.

Reſpecting that ever-to-be-lamented turn of mind, which impelled your friend to communicate my letter to you, under thoſe dangerous circumſtances, to which he could not be a ſtranger, though you were; and under the apparent conviction of all their poſſible conſequences, I am not willing to ſhock you, or torture myſelf by enlarging upon it. The evils reſulting from the indulgence of a ſiniſter impulſe were never more ſignally exhibited. Amongſt the moſt fatal of theſe is, the unavoidable diſcovery of too much of that incomprehenſible character to which we are now alluding. From his

his inconſiderate communication of my letter, and your advice, which he as inconſiderately followed, proceeds, I ſay, that alternative, that fatal evil, either of diſcovering what I have patiently concealed during twenty long years, or of foregoing my own juſtification under theſe injurious allegations. How ſage, and how applicable was the following advice, "Begin nothing of which thou haſt not well conſidered the end;" or, in other words, follow not haſtily thy firſt impulſe!

Different indeed is that amiable kind which has impelled many of our mutual friends to ſtrive at the accompliſhment of a reconciliation. But the maxim above will be found, upon deeper conſideration, not to be inapplicable even to their benevolent purpoſe.

The immediate object that ſtrikes them muſt neceſſarily be the *forgiveneſs* of the injuries complained of. That *term* imports the indubitable exiſtence of injuries; and let me calmly aſk, wherein appears the ſmalleſt confeſſion of any? and whether, on the other hand, *I* am not accuſed of injuries towards him? This was the pretended cauſe of his referring to you, and through you to the Captains, with my letter in his hand; and you ſee above, what, by your own confeſſion, was laid *ſucceſsfully* to my charge, and alſo, if I deſerve credit, the injuſtice of it. This is a material article, upon which I have much more to ſay; but in the mean time I will cordially join in the kind intentions of my friends; and though I perfectly know that *I* am the *only* injured party, I am ready to accompliſh that part of their wiſhes. To ſay the truth, it has long been accompliſhed. The greateſt part of my life has been a conſtant ſeries of forgiveneſs, with repeated reaſons for exerciſing it. In ſome minds, thus exerciſed, the outrage and its pardon are ſeparated by no interval; and I can aſſure theſe my good friends, that I moſt ſincerely *forgive*, however impoſſible it be to *forget* what is ſo repeatedly forced upon my feelings. *Forgiveneſs* therefore being no longer in queſtion, but moſt ſincerely granted, let us all conſider if there be no other bar to the reconciliation. The act of pardon not only implies an offence committed, but a tacit aſſurance that it ſhall not be repeated; and when the act of reunion is expected to follow that of pardon, a provident mind, however inclined to reconciliation, will look farther than the offence, and contemplate the

diſpoſition to offend. In that reſides the ſeat of the malady; and it is there that the wiſe and benevolent phyſician will direct his ſkill; nor will he reſtore the patient to his friends, for his ſake as well as theirs, till the cure be radically effected. In plainer terms, an imperfect and ſuperficial reconciliation ought not to be the aim of either of the parties, and certainly cannot be the wiſh of the real friends of either. Their intention muſt undoubtedly be the radical cure of the real evil—the cauſe of the offence, and not the effect. Thus then theſe excellent friends will perceive the neceſſity of a thorough conſideration of their firſt kind impulſe, and reflect on the miſchief of eſtabliſhing an irrevocable union between thoſe who are at this moment ſo little formed to be united.

Believe me, it is, my dear William, one of the greateſt misfortunes of my life to be thus obliged to enter upon this lamentable ſubject; and in your ſerious moments of reflection, I am ſure you will grieve at having been ſo materially inſtrumental in ſubjecting me to ſo cruel a neceſſity. Until, however, I have the moſt convincing proofs of a total change in the unfortunate diſpoſition alluded to, I ſhould be the weakeſt of men if I again liſtened to that firſt impulſe in myſelf, which I have ventured to blame in you, and ſo earneſtly recommended to the farther examination of thoſe who would at this time accompliſh the reconciliation.

I have no difficulty in confeſſing my own impulſe, becauſe I have already too often and too ineffectually liſtened to it; and if, after all I have ſaid, it can be neceſſary that I ſhould dwell upon the unpromiſing ſymptoms that occaſion this heſitation, I muſt continue the ungrateful ſubject.

It will not, thank God, be neceſſary to recur to former times for inſtances of flagrant delinquency. It will ſuffice to confine our attention to the ſingle object before us; nor will I here return even to the ſerious imputations laid at my door in your letter, and confuted in this.

To confirm what I have before alledged, that your friend makes no confeſſion of injuries towards me, but on the contrary complains of mine, a few expreſſions in a letter from himſelf, received very lately, when too he thought himſelf

himſelf on the point of reconciliation, will ſuffice. "He is damped," he ſays, "by the conſtant ſuſpicion I ſeem to harbour and expreſs, of his want of "ſincerity;" and adds, "how rejoiced he ſhould be, in being endowed with "the power of diſcovering whence can ariſe theſe ſuſpicions."—"He is "anxious to gain my good opinion and affection, and to know wherein, and "by what means, he forfeits and loſes it."—"Without this knowledge, he "muſt feel," he ſays, "uncertain of ſecurity in this repoſſeſſion; for he may "be ever liable to relapſe into the faults and habits which offend me." He adds, indeed, "that he is extremely ſorry to have done any thing to offend "me, and ſhall be anxious and happy to take any proper ſteps to attain my "forgiveneſs." From theſe quotations, nothing can be more evident than that he profeſſes himſelf totally ignorant of having given me any cauſe of offence, though ready to aſk forgiveneſs for that nothing. Say, from your heart, if even this be not offenſive, when he confeſſes himſelf conſcious of that outrage which occaſioned this rupture, and has even deſired that you would take the blame on yourſelf. Say too, what opinion I *ought* to entertain of "his ſincerity" in deſiring a reconciliation and "*forgiveneſs*," when he diſclaims the knowledge of having offended.

I muſt not conceal another extraordinary inſtance of his equivocal mode of ſoliciting the return of my "good opinion and affection," which will elucidate what may appear doubtful in his letter to me. This is a letter to his Uncle, dated January 27, 1795, intended, it is to be ſuppoſed, to re-eſtabliſh harmony, and to regain "my good opinion and affection." How far it is calculated to produce that deſirable end—whether it be intended to remove *my* unfavourable impreſſions, or to exhibit thoſe he has conceived of *me*—and whether he can be ſuppoſed deſirous of the reconciliation he ſolicits, I pretend not to determine. The letter was given to me by my Brother, undoubtedly by his Nephew's deſire, and I have it now by me with his conſent. It gives my Brother to underſtand, "That all the actions "of the writer are ſeen by me through a prejudiced medium"—"That he "hoped, when the prejudice (concerning his uſe of my letter) was worn "away, that I may ſee the truth"—"That he muſt ſuppoſe he acted wrong "in communicating that letter, as he finds himſelf blamed from ſo many "quarters."—"His Father has taxed him with what he could never learn

"the

" the foundation of"—" He has repeatedly entreated to have a fair exami-
" nation into his conduct, which his Father always deferred or avoided; in
" which he treated him with *injuſtice* and *uncandidly*, and afforded him *reaſon*
" *to ſuppoſe that his Father's accuſations* were *groundleſs and chimerical*"—" He
" is therefore in the ſituation of a criminal, towards whom *all juſtice is*
" *denied.*"—His Father, in all this, " is more to be pitied than he is; he
" ſees mole-hills where ſcarcely the ſhadow of them exiſts; and of thoſe
" ſhadows makes mountains, to his own torment, and to his Son's diſadvan-
" tage, unprofitably and uncharitably."

I will leave you to judge of the decency, as well as of the truth, of theſe allegations; and when he has ſeen this letter, I hope you will adviſe him not to repeat that I have " deferred or avoided" to explain what I had to complain of, for which I am ſo heavily charged, in ſuch language, and with ſuch ſtrong and ſignificant underlineations.—I again entreat that he may not deny having ſeen this letter, as I perceive he does, in the letter to his Uncle, all thoſe that compoſe our former correſpondence on this unfortunate buſineſs. I ſhould add alſo, that in ſeveral parts of that letter he ventures to tax Captain Tayler with breach of duty. Why was I not made acquainted with that material circumſtance, when deſired to go to Portſmouth for that expreſs purpoſe?

But, however hurt and fatigued with this moſt irkſome and affecting taſk, and however inclined at every moment to drop my pen and to finiſh, the buſineſs is of too much importance to my character and peace of mind, and it is become of too much conſequence that the *truth* ſhould be well enforced and underſtood, to allow me to reſt till I have cleared my reputation from ſome of the diſgraceful and degrading charges which almoſt every line of the letter before me exhibits. If ſuch imputations, ſuch injurious accuſations, are lodged againſt a Father in a letter to his Brother, and conveyed by that Brother to the hands of the Father himſelf, who can reſiſt the ſuſpicion of the validity of the charges? and who will doubt that the ſame, and worſe, will be alledged to ſtrangers behind his back?

Under ſuch a diſtreſſing predicament, labouring under ſo affecting a calamity, ſay, does not nature, does not even duty require me to reſiſt the injury?

injury? and may it not be conceived, that almoſt any other man would at once ſilence the detraction, were it *ſo completely in his power?*—But I will confine myſelf to his letter to his Uncle, now before me.

Here I quitted my paper to take a little exerciſe; and am returned to my miſerable occupation with ſo much diſguſt and uneaſineſs, that I really find it out of my power to proceed. This unconſcionable letter too, if it be not rather a volume, muſt be ſent off to-morrow morning; and the letter in queſtion is too full of aſperſions, to admit of their being wiped off within that time. I will therefore beg that you will obtain Major Pitt's permiſſion to ſend you a copy of his letter to his Uncle, which, if granted, I will take the firſt occaſion of tranſmitting, with my remarks upon it, which will ſerve and remain as a neceſſary appendix to this letter.

In the mean time let me entreat you to caſt your eye back upon the ſeveral lines which I have extracted (rather than regularly quoted) from his letter, and invite you ſeriouſly to conſider what credit can be due to the Major, when he aſſerts, in the ſame letter, that I liſten to "tale-bearers and tale-"inventors," and that I "defer or avoid bringing thoſe before him, who, "I ſay, have repeatedly heard him ſpeak diſreſpectfully of me." Need I go farther for evidence of "diſreſpectful language," than what I have above extracted from his own letter to his Uncle?

Upon a retroſpect of this voluminous and affecting ſtatement of facts, it will be neceſſary to recur to my ill-fated letter to my Son, of which ſo much has already been ſaid, and with which ſo much has been done. Notwithſtanding your opinion, and that of the other Captains who have engaged in the correſpondence upon that ſubject, that letter was not written in quality of his Colonel, but of his Father. I muſt be permitted to know my own intentions, and to be the beſt judge of the neceſſity of urging the advice and the remonſtrance of a parent, and of the degree of warmth and force of expreſſion which the occaſion called for.

This power of judging, and this parental prerogative, are evidently conteſted and firmly oppoſed by ſix Gentlemen, entirely ignorant of the facts which

which called for the exertion of them, and *that* under the miſtaken notion, which no conſtruction can ſupport, that the letter was written purely in the military capacity of the writer. Even under this conſtruction, the ſix Captains cannot juſtify their interference between a Colonel and his Major, at the ſolicitation of the latter, not only without the permiſſion, but in reprehenſion of the former, under whoſe command they all equally were. In every point of view, therefore, this interference muſt be unjuſtifiable, and calls for reparation.

If this complicated error proceeds from any original miſtake, or the poſſible miſrepreſentation of any party concerned, it can be no buſineſs of mine to prompt thoſe who may, in their turn, think themſelves entitled to reparation from *that* quarter. All I can ſay is, and *that* I can maintain upon grounds which I hope I ſhall never be obliged to reveal, that the apparent force of the remonſtrances in queſtion did not equal the call for it. Great indeed muſt be the reliance upon the extent of my forbearance, when I am almoſt dared, in the letter to Sir William Pitt, "to inveſtigate the buſineſs;" and hitherto I have, thank Heaven, been enabled to juſtify that reliance.

If, however, I continue to be accuſed of giving way to "prejudice, un-"fairneſs, injuſtice, injurious viſionary opinions, and uncharitableneſs," and that becauſe I find myſelf under the neceſſity of endeavouring to correct the dangerous temper and propenſities of a Son;—if my duty, as a father and a friend, is to be received and repreſented as an offence; and my friends and relations, as well as the public, to be impreſſed with ſuch ideas of me and my conduct;—if I am to be eſtranged from the principal officers of a Regiment which I have commanded (I hope without reproach) near forty years;—if, I ſay, I am doomed to be under ſuch a predicament, I need not ſurely repeat my excuſes for endeavouring at my juſtification, though in ſo many ſheets; nor for any warmth of expreſſion that may appear in them.

I remain, dear William,

Very affectionately yours,

(Signed) RIVERS.

IT appears in the ſequel of this correſpondence, in a letter from Captain William Pitt, that at the period immediately following the very circumſtantial letter to him, of April 30, 1795, he "was deſired by the Officers, on "the firſt of May, to lay before the writer of that letter, verbally and very "*ſhortly*, their ſentiments upon it, in which he concurred, when next he "ſhould ſee him." He adds, that "he did ſo." The writer of that letter has not the ſmalleſt recollection of that converſation; and it muſt have been very "ſhort" indeed, the various and unanſwerable contents, and the circumſtantiality of that letter, conſidered. All that is recollected, is a converſation, in which Captain Pitt propoſed a meeting, with ſome others of the Captains, the day the Regiment was to halt at Kingſton upon Thames. That propoſal was made the 13th of May; and ſo far from acquieſcing in it, as Captain Pitt ſuppoſed, the Colonel took the immediate reſolution not to comply with it. That he did not expreſs that reſolution, at that time, proceeded not only from his wiſh to avoid every occaſion of altercation, but from his conſtant determination that every minute circumſtance ſhould, as far as poſſible, be on paper. Accordingly, the very next day, May the 14th, an abſolute refuſal to meet the Captains, as propoſed, was expreſſed in a letter to Captain Pitt; nor can a ſtronger inſtance be afforded of the propriety of preferring written documents to verbal communications, than by this ſhort letter, and the conſtruction to which it has (not fairly) been ſubjected in the ſequel of this correſpondence.

No V.

To Captain William Morton Pitt.

Hertford-Street, May 14, 1795.

DEAR WILLIAM,

I HAVE thought a good deal upon the ſubject of your propoſal of meeting upon next Thurſday; and am come to the determination of deſiring that interview to be poſtponed, and that for ſeveral reaſons, which I will communicate in due time.

I ſincerely believe that we *all* lament the turn which the event in queſtion has unavoidably taken: I ſaw it to the bottom the very inſtant I received the firſt letter ſigned by the ſix Captains; and you muſt all do me the juſtice to acknowledge, that through the whole of our correſpondence I took all the pains in my power to propoſe, *in time*, what might have produced a better underſtanding—a reference to a few choſen friends. I received for anſwer, under all your ſignatures, that you were ready to appear to any charge I might bring; but not being conſcious of having acted improperly, you would not ſubmit to a private reference. I have not time to quote the preciſe words; but I am pretty ſure of the import of the anſwer to which I allude. From that time till yeſterday, no propoſal has been offered, of the like tendency; and as the buſineſs is much more public and notorious, and indeed, in ſome material points, much changed, I muſt entreat not to be preſſed, at preſent, for any interview of the kind you mentioned yeſterday.

In the mean time, you may ſafely aſſure the Gentlemen concerned, that not the ſmalleſt unfavourable impreſſion remains upon my mind concerning their *motives* in the tranſaction that has produced ſuch diſagreeable conſequences, which, could they have foreſeen, I am convinced they would have prevented.

In ſhort, the miſchief is done, and cannot be recalled; but I entreat that they would be aſſured of my ſincere wiſh that a perfect return of good underſtanding may take place between us; which is all that poſſibly could be effected, were they to put themſelves to the trouble you have propoſed.

I have ſaid more than I intended; my ſimple wiſh being to prevent your engaging Captains Bingham and Sir G. Glyn to an interview, which cannot produce more than they already poſſeſs, viz. a very ſincere and cordial deſire, on my part, to forget any ſhare they may be ſuppoſed to have taken, the reſult of which they could not foreſee.

I am, dear William,

Yours affectionately,

(Signed) RIVERS.

No VI.

To Captain Bingham.

London, June 13, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

I REJOICED in the hope that my long letter to Captain Pitt, of April 30, would have been the laſt with which you and the Gentlemen concerned in that diſagreeable ſubject would have been troubled. I was on that account very explicit, and, I fear, prolix; it being my intention to give an ample explanation of the whole of my conduct in a tranſaction which has been ſadly miſunderſtood, and, I muſt add, miſrepreſented. In conſequence of that letter, I have had ſome converſations with Captain Pitt, which render it very expedient that I ſhould again be troubleſome, leſt my ſentiments ſhould be again miſtaken.

Words *ſpoken* are liable to be miſapprehended, and of conſequence (however innocently) to be mis-ſtated. In matters therefore of moment and delicacy, words *written*, which, if doubtful, are ſubject to the explanation of the writer, and at all times open to examination, muſt in juſtice be allowed preferable. Under this conviction, I muſt repeat my ſenſe of Captain Pitt's candour in committing to paper, and to my conſideration, the ſtate of his ſentiments and conduct, in his letter of the 19th of February to the Major, and my obligation for affording me ſo ample and ſo fair a field for the diſplay of *the truth*, and of the egregious deluſion under which thoſe ſentiments and that conduct of his have been formed.

There remains no doubt that this has been effectuated by my letter of April 30. The facts and arguments therein neither have been, nor can they be, refuted; being chiefly founded upon my own perfect knowledge of circumſtances which could *not* be *known*, and conſequently ought not to have been called in queſtion by any man or ſet of men whatever.

In the converſations alluded to with Captain Pitt, in conſequence of my long letter, he propoſed an interview between the three remaining Captains and myſelf, to which I did not conſent; alledging the inutility of ſuch a ſtep, if intended as a mark of reconciliation with thoſe towards whom I feel not the ſmalleſt degree of enmity; of which he himſelf, who was the chief mover, might be convinced by my conduct towards him. Theſe aſſurances I wiſhed him to convey to you and Sir G. Glyn, as he was departing to join the Regiment; and upon his return to town, he gave me to underſtand that, "according to my deſire, he had reported to you the friendly diſpo-"ſition in which he left me, and THAT NOTHING MORE SHOULD BE SAID "UPON THE SUBJECT." To the latter part of his report I immediately objected, aſſuring him that he muſt have miſunderſtood me, and that it was impoſſible that I ſhould have uttered ſuch a declaration, however ſincerely deſirous of being *enabled* to adopt it.

To ſay the truth (and I ſay it with infinite concern), all the interviews that can take place—all the temper and all the wiſdom that can be exerted, cannot now remedy the evil. We may embrace in perfect amneſty of all offences, and lament in the ſincereſt cordiality; but the deed can no more be recalled, than breath can be reſtored to the lifeleſs trunk. This muſt be evident to thoſe who will ſuffer themſelves to reflect, and who know the real foundation of the evil, the extraordinary means by which it was encouraged to operate, the reſolute conſtancy with which it has been perſiſted in, and the cataſtrophe in which it has irreparably terminated.

However anxiouſly I may have endeavoured that "*nothing more ſhould be ſaid upon the ſubject*," ſo glaring a fact will cry aloud for itſelf. It has driven me from a ſtation I had held, not I hope unworthily, near forty years. It evidently ſubjects me to the appearance of having ſignally miſconducted myſelf towards the Officers of the Regiment; and the ſilent patience with which it has been ſuffered, confirms the opinion of my delinquency. Can it be ſuppoſed that, under ſuch a trial, I ſhould myſelf aſſiſt in confirming that opinion by a promiſe "that nothing more ſhould be ſaid upon the ſubject?"

The

The ſole intention of my troubling you with this, is to correct THAT ESSENTIAL MISTAKE, and to convince you that Captain Pitt muſt have totally miſunderſtood me in that inſtance, however juſtly he repreſented my ſentiments in other reſpects. In ſhort, I have every juſt reaſon to expect to be as ſignally juſtified, as I have been notoriouſly outraged; and I do moſt ſincerely lament the impoſſibility of *my* exculpation without an alternative which needs no explanation.

I truſt that Captain Pitt's ſolicitude to learn what I meant by the terms *danger*, and *dangerous*, which I have repeated in different parts of my correſpondence, will receive its anſwer and explanation in what I have ſaid above. When a man in a public and reſponſible ſtation is ſubjected to ſerious animadverſions, and his character and reputation are thus called in queſtion and publicly ſcrutiniſed, is he in no *danger?* and if he ſhould at length find himſelf under the neceſſity of juſtifying himſelf, will they, who may be found to have unjuſtly called him to account, be exempt from danger?

I remain, dear Sir,

&c. &c.

(Signed) RIVERS.

No VII.

The Captains to Lord Rivers.

Brighton Camp, June 17, 1795.

MY LORD,

WE really underſtood that it was your Lordſhip's inclination to drop the ſubject of our late correſpondence, and that a perfect reconciliation had taken place between us;* and we cannot help being ſurpriſed to find thoſe hopes

* This could not have been underſtood by the letter of the 30th of April, but juſt the reverſe; and therefore muſt have been in conſequence of Captain Pitt's very miſtaken report of the expreſſions of this writer, which theſe Gentlemen cannot be ſurpriſed at his taking the firſt opportunity of refuting.

hopes entirely fruſtrated by your Lordſhip's letter of the 13th inſtant. However we may lament that any difference of opinion has ariſen, we cannot think, upon the moſt minute inveſtigation, that our conduct deſerves the ſevere terms which are applied to it. We have been kept nearly two years in ſuſpenſe; and we muſt entreat your Lordſhip, that the danger, in which we are ſuppoſed to ſtand, and to which you have ſo often alluded, may no longer be concealed; but that the charge, if there be any to be brought againſt us, may come forward without farther delay, or that this ſubject may be dropped for ever, which we conceive we have a right to expect.*

We are convinced that we have never ſwerved from the ſtrict line of our duty, or acted in any reſpect unbecoming the character of Gentlemen or Officers; nor can we imagine the accuſations of having outraged your Lordſhip, or of having driven you from the Regiment, can be applied to us; for we do moſt ſolemnly aver (which has been the tenour of all our correſpondence), that we have never preſumed to accuſe, cenſure, or call you to account;—charges which we find brought againſt us in ſeveral of your Lordſhip's letters. To our own letters we appeal; and on them, and our explanation of our motives, we rely for a complete and honourable acquittal. We have conſtantly adhered to this ſimple point; we were called upon to give evidence as to one fact, and we gave it fairly and truly.

We have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's faithful and obedient Servants,

(Signed) RICHD BINGHAM,
GEO. GLYN,
W. M. PITT.

* It is hardly to be conceived that theſe Gentlemen could have ſeen the concluding paragraph of the very letter to which this is an anſwer; and to that they are again referred for what they "have a right to expect."

BEFORE we quit this very eſſential Second Part, it is neceſſary to afford it ſome conſideration.

The letter from Captain Pitt to the Major, does not ſpare the Father and Colonel any more than the Adjutant; and there is ſome reaſon to hope, that the ſerious allegations in that letter have met with ample refutation in the long anſwer of April 30, ſince not a word of reply to it has been attempted.

Upon the moſt unprejudiced examination of the next letter of any moment, that of June 13, to Captain Bingham, it does not appear to call for that diſpleaſure which is ſufficiently evident in the immediate anſwer of the 17th. The letter is calculated to convey to his correſpondents, without diſguiſe, the ſenſe the writer entertained of the predicament in which he was placed, and chiefly to correct the error they might be ſubject to, from Captain Pitt's very material miſapprehenſion of the meſſage he undertook to deliver to them. How far the conviction of that miſapprehenſion may have operated upon the ſtyle of the anſwer, it would not be fair to pronounce.

The writer laments, with as much feeling as his correſpondents can poſſibly complain, that what they call "ſevere terms," are the moſt moderate by which he can deſcribe his preſent ſituation. If therefore there be any appearance of ſeverity in that letter, it is that of truth, reſulting from the ſeverity of thoſe circumſtances to which he himſelf has been reduced. If the words "outrage, and being driven from the Regiment," are treated as "ſevere," theſe Gentlemen are once more very earneſtly and calmly entreated to conſider whether a Father be not outraged, when a private and very ſerious letter to his Son is ſubmitted to the public animadverſion of any ſet of Gentlemen, of whatever deſcription; and whether, from the rupture which naturally enſues between the Colonel and his Major (for they ſtand alſo in that relation), one of them muſt not be "driven from the Regiment," the buſineſs of which cannot proceed, with two Officers in thoſe ſtations, who do not meet.

If it be the word "miſrepreſented," that is eſteemed ſevere, let it never be forgotten that every part of the charge againſt the Colonel and the Adjutant, before ſufficiently confuted, has been ſince diſavowed in the moſt unequivocal terms by the perſon himſelf who was falſely ſuppoſed to be aggrieved.

aggrieved.* If, under ſuch circumſtances, the term "miſrepreſented," or any other terms uſed in this correſpondence, can be fairly complained of as ſevere, let candour judge.

If, as is before ſaid, a number of Gentlemen cannot eaſily write one letter, ſtill leſs can they write one ſentence. The ſtyle of that ſentence, in their laſt, which ends with "we conceive we have a right to expect," is perfectly familiar to the perſon to whom it is addreſſed. The ſingle word "right," diſcovers its author: a word of no ſmall importance in theſe times, which ſhould be uſed with circumſpection. In the preſent caſe, it is not eaſy to be comprehended. "Sir," ſays this Gentleman, "we have a right to expect "that you ſhould bring forward, without any farther delay, a charge againſt "us; or that the ſubject of *that charge which we* HAVE *brought againſt you*, "might be dropped for ever." Surely a more whimſical claim is not to be found in the whole catalogue of the *Rights of Man*. Not a ſyllable of any intention "to bring forward a charge" can be found in any of this writer's correſpondence, unleſs ſelf-defence can be ſo called. He has been in patient though earneſt expectation, that the accuſations brought againſt him, either directly or collaterally, might be diſcovered to be unfounded, and *confeſſed to be ſo*. It is he, therefore, who has "been kept in ſuſpenſe" ſo long a time, in the juſt hope of a releaſe from a very diſgraceful ſituation; and, however diſinclined he himſelf may be to uſe that language, there will be thoſe who will think he has a very evident "right to expect" that releaſe.

The frequent repetitions that appear in theſe ſheets, will not eſcape the obſervation, and probably the diſguſt of the reader. He will, however, have the candour to obſerve, that they are forced upon the writer by the want of attention to the repeated explanations and ſolemn aſſeverations he has been compelled to employ. In his long letter (for one inſtance) of April 30, near the beginning of this Second Part, he repeatedly urges the neceſſity of obtaining ſome reparation; and yet we ſee, in the very laſt letter from his correſpondents, that "they really underſtoood that it was his inclination "to drop the ſubject—that a perfect reconciliation had taken place—and "that they were ſurpriſed to find thoſe hopes fruſtrated."

* See part of a Note, in ſmall capitals, to Captain Pitt's letter to the Major, of Feb. 19, 1795—page 52.